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FARM HOMES
IN-DOORS
AND OUT-DOORS

E. H. LELAND

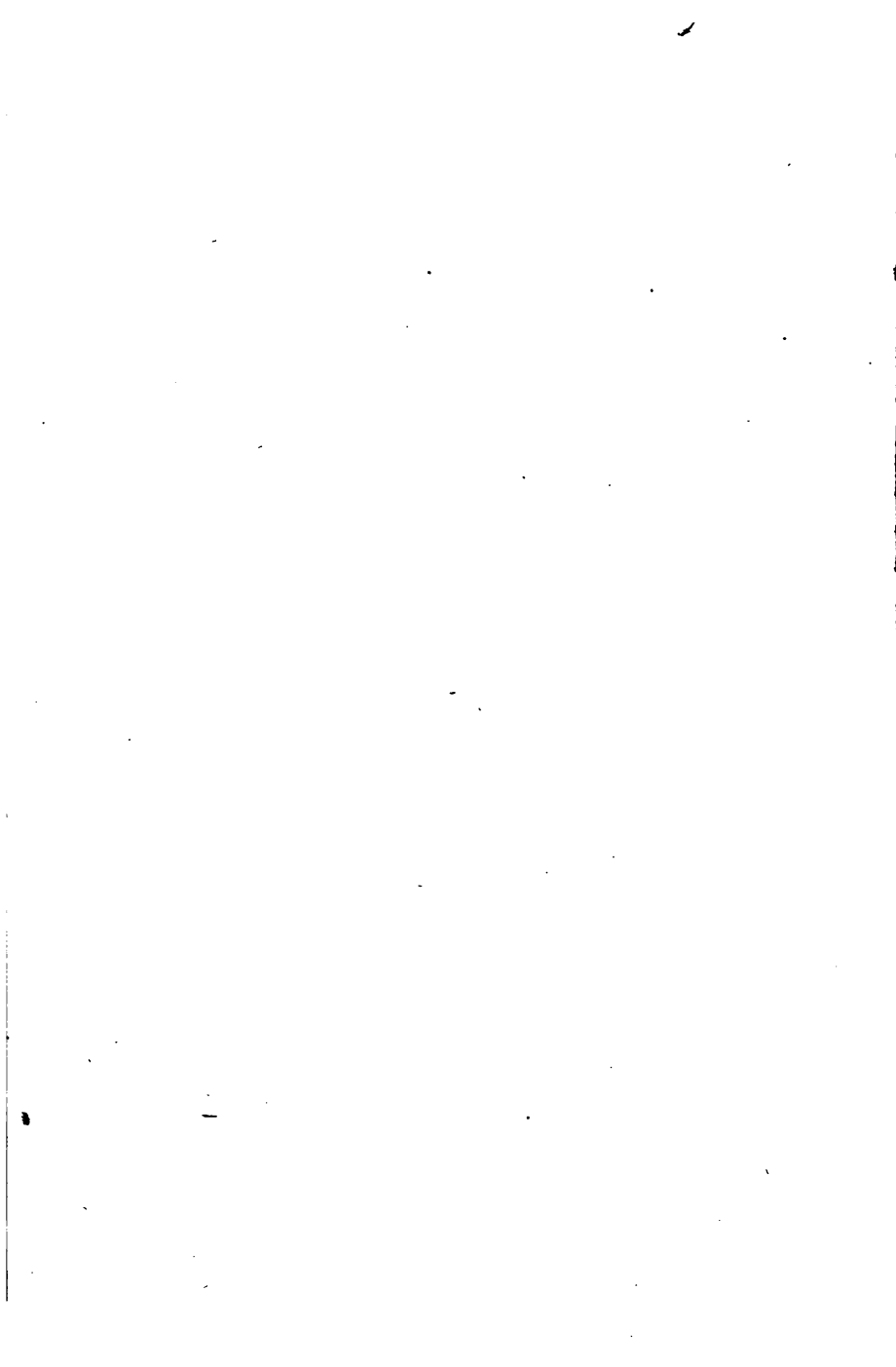
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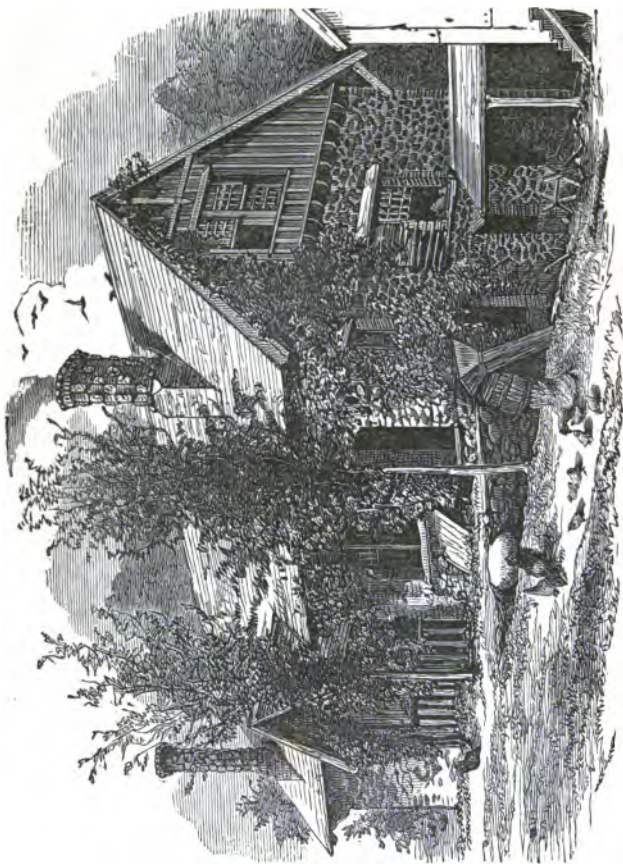




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(Frontispiece.)

FARM HOMES

IN-DOORS AND OUT-DOORS.

BY

E. H. LELAND.

ILLUSTRATED.



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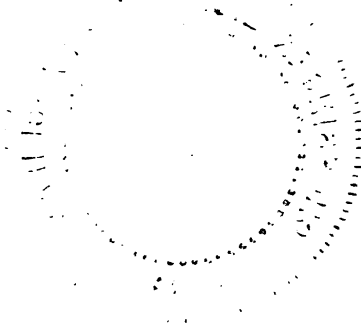


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FARM HOMES, IN·DOORS AND OUT·DOORS.

CHAPTER I.

BUILDING.

Some one has intimated that he who has eyes for seeing is a very wealthy man—he owns the landscape ! Whoever is blessed with eyes, then, owes it to God and to his fellow-man that he should contribute his mite of beauty and cheerfulness to the world around him.

In no way can he do this with more telling effect than in creating a lovely home, in building a comfortable and attractive house, and making the most and best of its surroundings. No matter how small his possessions may be, or how plain and cheap his materials, it is always possible for every farmer to make the landscape a little more pleasing, from the fact of his having a hand in it.

If this seems a small achievement, and one without “profit,” let the reader call to mind those farm-houses—seen too often—whose rickety fences, unkempt door-yards, and scattered tools, are an ugly blot upon nature’s fair page, and I am sure he will feel the great moral as well as financial meaning that lies in even the humblest expressions of beauty, thrift, and order—a meaning that

announces pretty clearly, in farming regions, the difference between the man and the sluggard—between the genuine and worthy “lord of the soil” and the slack-souled pauper who makes no honorable return to the acres that feed him.

It is a great thing to build the house that is to be one's home. There are few pleasures so unalloyed as that of selecting the ground, laying the foundation, and watching day by day the growth of wall and roof that go to form one's own secure kingdom through the years to come. And it is a pleasure that cannot be entered upon too seriously. If there are to be but three rooms, they will constitute the home, and the opportunity exists to make them either charmingly cozy and cheerful, or depressingly ugly. Therefore, even a small house-plan should be well considered. A house-plan is easily torn down and remodelled; it costs nothing to add a paper window here, or to remove a paper partition there; a pencil line changes a staircase or enlarges the dining-room; a few moments of inexpensive reflection lets the morning sunlight into a cheerless kitchen, builds a clothes-press, and remodels the pantry; or, if something better is thought of, the whole establishment can be easily tossed aside, and not even the shadow of the house-mover's bill presents itself. But, having put a plan into solid timber and mortar, and then coming to find how greatly the house might be improved—ah, woe the day! It is no idle thing to meddle with the stair-cases and partitions, and the gloomily-lighted kitchen.

THE SITE.

The building site is, of course, the first thing to be considered. One's first resolution regarding it should be to avoid all anxiety to jump into the road. A house crowding upon the highway loses all dignity and home-like repose, and gains nothing but dust. Such choice of location may

possibly be an hereditary trait, coming down from that long ago time, when houses grew up along the faintly-marked trails of emigration, and closely clung there, as if in mortal fear of savages and wild animals lurking in the back-ground. But in these peaceful days, it is in better taste to sit back in a leisurely and composed way, as if not afraid of one's own fields and woodlands, but at home and happy with them. Let no site be chosen because of its proximity to the road, or because it is "handy to water." Select the finest spot on the farm—a place combining, if possible, elevation, eastern and southern frontage, natural trees, a pleasant outlook, and make all else conform to it.

If there is a stream of water or a lake in the vicinity, try to have a glimpse of it for the living-room windows. A landscape without a bit of water in it is almost as pitiful as the face of a blind man, as any one will testify who has once lived by babbling brooks or near the shores of lake or ocean.

There are opportunities for improving all building sites. The farmer priding himself upon his "good, hard common sense," may sneer at the term "landscape gardening," but properly pruned trees, a well-kept stretch of turf, and shrubberies planted in the right place, are just as much to his credit as a good barn or staunch fences. Landscape gardening need not necessarily mean littering one's grounds with rubbishy rockeries and puny evergreens, or cutting them up with devious paths and drives. To bring the best into notice, and to soften or put out of sight that which is not attractive, is all that is required. Simple but correct touches will tell. A light foot-bridge thrown over the brook where it winds into view between the willows of the meadow, two or three rustic seats grouped under some near shade tree, a great vase (made of a section of hollow tree) filled and surrounded with hardy, climbing vines,

and placed near the curve of the carriage-way, a spacious sweep of beautiful turf sloping away to meet the darker verdure of a leafy hedge, a few firs or pines planted where winter sunsets may glow through them—these and similarly simple “landscape” touches add wonderfully to the attractions of a farm-house, and mark the difference between the intelligent and progressive farmer and the dull plodder who never lifts his eyes above the ground, and believes in letting well enough alone.

THE PLAN.

After the site is decided upon, and one knows the point of compass he is to face—which I sincerely hope is squarely south or squarely east, or squarely anywhere, rather than a disagreeable “bias,” which always makes the sun seem out of gear and the pole-star hopelessly dislodged—let the plans be brought out and studied for a while.

Here, among house-plans, a worthy field is open to women. They, who live so constantly within doors, should have a controlling voice in all interior arrangements. They know, or ought to know, how a certain number of rooms can be planned, so as to secure convenience and cheerfulness to their occupants, and they will naturally be more thoughtful, as architects, of all details pertaining to comfort, and the easier carrying on of household routine. The man-mind always means well, as a general thing, but it is sometimes too grand to focus itself upon an easy angle in a staircase, a corner-cupboard, the one best place for the pantry-window, or the extra door that saves so many steps for tired feet. Things like these would be taken into consideration, if women would plan their own homes, or, at any rate, have a voice in regard to some of the details of home-building. It ought to enter into every woman's education to know how to plan a thoroughly cheerful, convenient,

and healthful house ; to know how to make the best of even a three-roomed cottage, as well as the statelier mansion which it may be her good fortune to possess.

Young country-girls, it rests largely with you to uplift and adorn and dignify farm-life !—to so refine and brighten and enrich that which is now so often bleak and ugly and barren, that your brothers, instead of breaking away to clerkships and offices, or something worse, will be loth to leave their noble farm-homes ; and you yourselves will find something better there than in the back-rooms of milliners' shops, or the unhealthful slavery of a dress-maker's sewing-machine.

There is a great deal of talk in the household departments of newspapers and magazines about making homes attractive, and the bulk of it is in regard to barrel-chairs, fancy match-safes, and embroidered lambrequins. These things are well enough ; but, my country-girl, go you much deeper than this line of decoration, and begin at the ground-work of things ! Draw plans of your future home, and review them with John or Charles—or whatever his dear name may be—until you have one so good, and yet so in keeping with the money to be invested, that life within it will be a satisfaction and a blessing. Build a permanent home—or the beginning of one—at the outset, and give it all possible graces, instead of settling down in some ugly little square box of a “temporary” character, with the intention of building a grand house when the “better times” come. The Better Times are when youth and health and love join hands, and set out upon the journey of life together. Build the home now, and though you commence with only a kitchen and a bedroom, the seasons will come and go, bringing their gifts of improvement and beauty, and thirty years hence your home will be a far sweeter and lovelier abode than any grand “new house,” at such a time, can possibly be.

THE FOUR ESSENTIALS.

In planning a house, let four essential points be kept in view—Drainage, Sunlight, Ventilation, and a Bath-room. These features can be compassed even in the smallest cottage, and yet thousands of farm-houses are being completed to-day without a thought of them. It is cheering to reflect, however, that other thousands of farm-houses are going up wherein these vital considerations have been kept first and foremost. Progress in building-reform is unnecessarily slow, especially in the new Western States, and wives and daughters should set themselves to thinking and studying about these things, and so hasten on the millenium of right living.

SUNLIGHT.

The sun, if you will only open your house to him, is a



Fig. 1.—A "DESIRABLE SUBSTITUTE."

faithful physician, who will be pretty constant in attendance, and who will send in no bills. Many years ago glass was something of a luxury, but now we can all have good-sized windows, and plenty of them, at moderate cost, and there is no excuse for making mere loop-holes, through which the sun can cast but half an eye, and from which one can gain only

narrow glimpses of the beautiful outer world.

I am sufficiently acquainted with the conservative character of many country people to know that expressions of disdain will come from some quarters when I

mention Bay Windows. Nevertheless bay windows are a good thing. Their effect is very much like letting heaven into one's house, at least it ought to be like that, for it is nothing but absurdity and wickedness to darken such windows with shutters or heavy curtains until only a struggling ray of sunlight can be seen.

If bay windows are too expensive, a very desirable substitute can be had by placing two ordinary sized windows



Fig. 2.—A KITCHEN WINDOW.

side by side with a wide capacious ledge at the bottom for seats or for plants.

A room with a window like this cannot fail to be cheery, and its effect in a simple cottage house is quite sumptuous. There is likewise in its favor the fact that it is less exposed than the deep bay window to outer heat and cold.

In a kitchen or in a child's bedroom, or in an attic where the walls are low, two half-windows set side by side and made to slide or to open on hinges, admit a broad, generous light, and give an apartment a pretty and pleasing rustic air.

Let the builder endeavor to have all rooms in daily use,

especially bedrooms and sitting-rooms, well lighted by the sun. "To sleep on unsunned beds in unsunned chambers, and to work day after day in unsunned rooms, is the unrepented sin of half the nation," vigorously affirms a prominent writer. But this should not be said of that portion of the nation living in the country far from those towering brick walls whose steps take hold on basement kitchens, and in whose depressing shadows many lives must necessarily be spent. In the country, with a whole sky to draw from, let there be light! If any rooms in the house must look solely to the north for

illumination, let them be the parlor and the spare chamber. People who come and go can be cheerful for a while in a north-windowed apartment, but the constant dwellers in a house need its sunniest rooms.

Verandas are most desirable on the south and west sides of a house, for while they ward off the mid-day heat of summer, they still freely admit the low down winter sun.

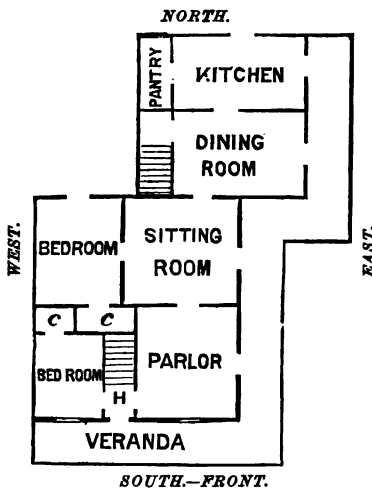


Fig. 3.—A HOUSE WITHOUT SUNLIGHT.

From east windows we can hardly have too much light even in summer, and bedrooms and nurseries should be planned to receive the full benefit of them.

Here is an example of a farm-house, large and well built, so far as material and finish go, that for want of intelligence and forethought, or both, is almost devoid of sunlight in its most used rooms.

The wide veranda—very pleasant in itself—shuts off the winter sun by the time it is two hours high, and the rooms are arranged with such ingenious stupidity that those in common use have no sunlight whatever for the remainder of the day. To be sure, in summer it is “delightfully cool” in this house, (so it is in most caves and dungeons!) and always there is some one of the numerous family “ailing” within its walls—which is not at all delightful.

In plan number four is a house costing many hundreds less, but worth many thousands more, because it is so cheerfully and healthfully lighted. The dining-room—which in my opinion should always have a large east window—is the least pleasant, especially on rainy

mornings; but a fire in the open stove or fire-place, and the mirror above it reflecting the window opposite, make it a very tolerable room. On the second floor are four large sunny bedrooms, and above is a long, well-lighted garret or attic, which makes a fine play-room for the children in stormy weather.

Plan number five was designed for a young farmer of small family and small means, and is found to be delight-

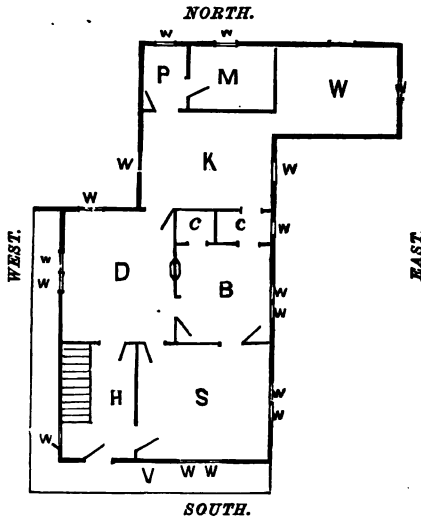


Fig. 4.—A WELL-LIGHTED HOUSE.

V, Veranda; H, Hall; S, Sitting-room; D, Dining-room; B, Bedroom; c, c, Clothes-press and Bath-room; K, Kitchen; P, Pantry; M, Milk-room; W, Wood-house.

fully bright and cosy. A wide-arched door, seldom closed, between the sitting and dining-rooms permits both apartments to be flooded with light from the large south window, and these, together with the west bed-

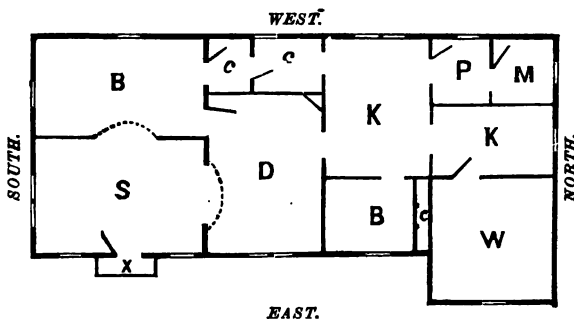


Fig. 5.—A ONE-STORY HOUSE.

X, Portico; S, Sitting-room; D, Dining-room; B, B, Bedrooms; c, c, Clothes-press and Bath-room; K, K, Summer and Winter Kitchens; P, M, Pantry and Milk-room; W, Wood-house.

room, are all comfortably warmed in winter by one good wood or coal stove.

Number six is the ground plan of a small house perched nest-like upon a picturesque knoll with its dark pines and brilliant maples. Within doors it is quite airy and regal because of its high walls, wide windows, and the graceful arch opening opposite the entrance, displaying the gay little dining-room with its large east window filled with plants. On the second floor are two capacious bedrooms and a small room for clothing, bedding, etc. Among small farm-homes one seldom sees a more thoroughly satisfactory plan than this—combining as it does comfort, cheapness, and economy. A man and wife just beginning house-keeping might exist very passably by dispensing with the upper story and adding a small wing for kitchen and extra bedroom, devoting the space occupied by the stair-case to china and linen closets. But the cost of the upper floor is comparatively small, and it

ensures pleasant and capacious sleeping rooms for the family of the future.

"What a pleasant home you have!" is the exclamation of all who visit this house, and the secret of its peculiar charm lies in the fact that a young farmer's wife first dreamed it out upon paper until she had cheerfulness and utility successfully combined. Then she gave the plan to her husband—wise and appreciative man. He built it to the letter, and neither have had cause to regret this little branching out from the ordinary model of cheap farm-houses

—namely, a parlor, seldom used, a big kitchen where the steam and heat of washing and cooking makes it anything but pleasant for eating purposes, and two or three ugly little sleeping-rooms that have barely space for anything but beds.

Just here I want to enter my humble protest against any parlor that pinches and stints other rooms in order to exist. First secure the convenient kitchen, the pleasant dining-room, the well-sunned and well-ventilated bedrooms, the bath-room, the ample pantry and milk-room. Then, if space permits, have a parlor by all means—as pretty a parlor as possible—and use it. It is bad taste and bad morals to make "most anything" answer for family use day after day, while the best room and the best of everything is sacredly reserved for outside people, people who are not greatly benefited after all, for when we visit do we not observe that it is the cordial hos-

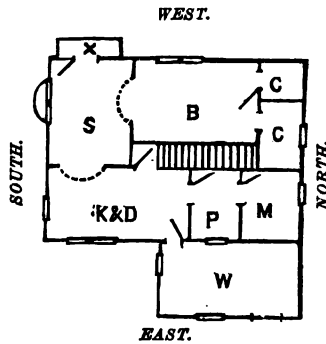


Fig. 6.

S, Sitting-room; *B*, Bedroom; *c, c*, Wardrobe and Bath-room; *K, D*, Dining-room and Winter Kitchen; *M, P*, Milk-room and Pantry; *W*, Wood-house and Summer Kitchen; *X*, Portico.

pitality, the friendly talk, the simple, easily served meal that we enjoy, and not the stiff atmosphere of a seldom

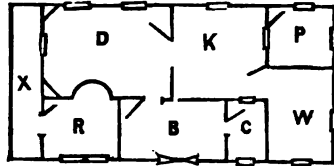


Fig. 7.

X, South Porch; R, Recess; D, Dining-room; B, Bedroom; c, Bath-room; K, Kitchen; P, Pantry; W, Wood-shed.

her parlor with her family, it is better to defer such an apartment. A cozy little nook off the dining-room, separated from it by an arched space, or a little recess without the arch, but having a pleasant window and an easy chair or two, are good substitutes. In such a place a visitor can sit and feel that pleasurable comfort of being in a "home" room and giving no one any trouble or distress.

So, if either the parlor or some one of these aforementioned rooms must be given up, let the parlor go, and make the rest of the house so sweet and sunny and beautiful that it will never be missed.

Clean, well-kept houses built from plans like numbers seven, eight and nine can cheerfully wait until added parlors can be afforded.

Sometimes in pioneer regions or in cases of very small means, the house-builder is obliged to dispense with both

used room, the laboriously prepared dishes and the general feeling that we are creating an unusual and perhaps troublesome stir in the every day lives of our friends?

Unless a home-keeper can afford to keep help and so find time to enjoy

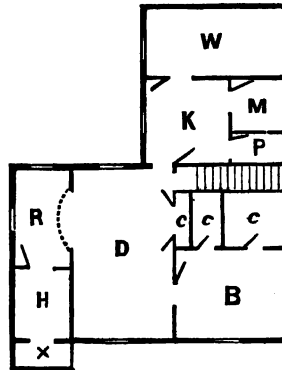


Fig. 8.

X, Portico; R, Recess; D, Dining Room; B, Bedroom; c, c, c, Cupboard, Closet, and Bath-room; K, Kitchen; M, P, Milk-room and Pantry; W, Wood-shed.

parlor and dining-room. But even in such instances a house can be attractive. I know a western farm-house where the parlor, dining-room, kitchen, library, hall, reception-room and conservatory are all combined in one apartment, and yet such is the skill and taste of the woman presiding over it that sitting there in the large, sunshiny, orderly room, one falls in love with its picturesque simplicity, and feels that henceforth partitions and folding - doors and winding stair-cases are vain and wearisome superfluities. Square and rather ugly looks the house outwardly, with its weather-painted boards, but within all is bright and cheery, a vein of taste and intelligence running through everything. The main

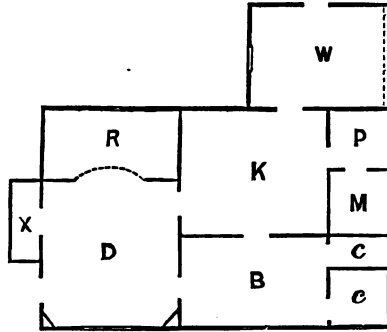


Fig. 9.

X, Portico; R, Recess; D, Dining-room; B, Bedroom; c, c, Clothes Closet and Bath-room; K, Kitchen; W, Wood-shed; P, Pantry; M, Milk-room.

or "living" room is about fifteen by twenty-four feet, and there are no chambers. The bedrooms are small but sunny, and possess no carpets or superfluous furniture. A small fire-place built of rough stone, but with good draught lights up the dining-room—the cook-stove retiring with the modesty of true merit toward the end of the apartment. Where everything pertaining to kitchen-work is kept is a mystery until the time for tea approaches, when the bright woman opens a cupboard here, pulls out a drawer there, whisks off the ornamental roof of the retiring cook-stove, and presto!—what was a few moments ago a quiet sitting-room with its work-basket, open book, and rocking-chair, is now an animated

kitchen, with the kettle singing, a bright coffee-pot "infusing" and a spring chicken broiling upon the glowing coals.

While the bright woman spreads the table she archly invites you to take a book from the library and find a seat in the conservatory until called for. So from four long shelves shielded from dust by a neat screen, you select some fresh volume or periodical that you hardly

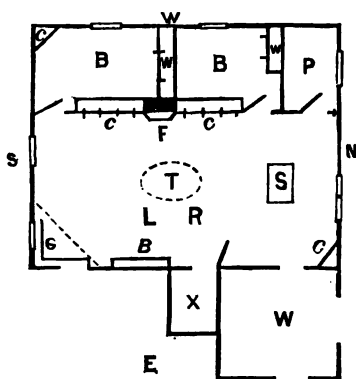


Fig. 10.

L, R, Living-room; S, Cook-stove; F, Open Fire-place; G, Greenhouse; c, c, c, Corner Cupboards, Side Cupboards, and Drawers; T, Dining Table; B, Bedroom and Bookshelves; P, Pantry; W, Woodshed and Wardrobes; X, Porch.

expected to see in such a "woody" place, and betake yourself to the "conservatory." Observing its architecture you see that a south and east window are placed quite near each other, their broad sills joining and holding an array of wisely chosen and wisely cared for plants. Across this brilliant little corner, partly to shield the plants from dust and partly to enhance their pretty verdure, is hung a nicely laundered cur-

tain of coarse book-muslin looped back at either side and corniced across the top with graceful clusters of ferns and autumn leaves. You sit down in a comfortable old chair among the heliotropes and geraniums and tea-roses, with whose fragrance the spirit of Java and the savory smell of broiling chicken cheerfully mingle, and you feel that life has a great many mercies.

Do I diverge from the business of building? No, I am only trying to show what a builder and a builder's wife can do with one room.

The numerous cupboards and drawers set into the wall and nearly covering one side of this pleasant living-room were devised by this bright woman herself, and formed some of her husband's rainy-day work in the first year of their pioneer life.

There is a tiny low-down cupboard for her little girl's dolls and tea-sets, and a larger one above it for the twelve-year-old son's collection of shells and minerals, fish-lines, nails, strings, knives, and all those odds and ends dear to a boy's heart. And there are drawers for bed and table linen and best dresses and Sunday coats; drawers for shawls, blankets, stockings and flannels; and a drawer that pulled out proves to be a molding-board with a row of little boxes at the back holding spices, salt, etc. Above these are cupboards for dishes and general dining and kitchen ware, and the pots and kettles, brooms, dusters, dish-pans, and smoothing irons find a place in a tall corner cupboard. Our hostess oiled and varnished all the wood-work in this room with her own hands, and its mellow rich tint brightened up with the numerous brass handles and fastenings of the cupboards and drawers, is in good keeping with the quaint fire-place and the homely substantial furniture.

When I suggested that an extra large "bump" of order must be required to keep so many drawers and cupboards at rights, the bright woman replied that maintaining order was the easiest thing in the world, since there was a place for every article, and that she could prepare a meal in the night without light, if no light could be had, almost as easily as in the day time.

This house—to which a "wing" will be added in a year or two for parlor, a bath-room, and a spare bed-room—shows how much can be made of little, how space can be utilized, and what clever magicians are order and taste aided by a very little money!

HALLS.

If one's house must be small and the rooms few, still a hall or some sort of pleasant vestibule ought to be afforded, rather than have the living-room or parlor open abruptly into the open air. It is good for family habits, too, that the children have a regular place for hats and caps, and an opportunity before a hall mirror to see that they are presentable prior to appearing in the sitting or dining-room. Such little household regulations teach children order and self-control.

This moral view of the Hall brings up another consideration. There are many kind-hearted, fair-minded house-keepers who regard the main entrance of their houses as being too sacred for daily use, and prefer that husband and children and intimate friends should "run around" to a side or a kitchen door. This is a mistake. Better live in a hut with but one entrance than have a door-way too grand for those nearest us to walk through! Indeed, the burden of these chapters will be that we had best have nothing that is "too good for human nature's daily food."

But these same fair-minded house-keepers will exclaim, "Oh, it is all very well to talk about the footsteps of those nearest us, but I can't afford to have my hall-carpet covered with mud every day and torn to tatters in six months!"

Of course you cannot afford it, nor can your afford to have your children acquire the careless manners and habits that come of the back-door principle. Have a door-mat at the hall door, and teach little feet to respect it. Have everything everywhere as fine and tasteful as means will permit, and lead the children to understand that the condition of having good and pretty things to use is—care!—just a little thoughtful care.

If the house is to be large enough, have a hall, and fit

it up for daily use. "Nothing is so dreary and uninviting as the ordinary little hall or "entry" that is found in half the houses of quite well-to-do people. It is usually dark, narrow, bare, and possessed of stale odors, that suggest damp umbrellas and yesterday's dinner. There seems among very many to be nothing expected of this part of the house but gloom and cold oil-cloth, and may be a row of pegs for stray hats. Instead of such cheerless entrances we ought to have halls that say at once to the in-comer, "Welcome!"—that enfold him in an atmosphere of quiet, comforting, sheltering hospitality. Such an atmosphere is possible in even a 6 by 8 room. If, however, there are chambers in the house plan, it is good economy to have a hall large enough to include the staircase and leave ample space for necessary hall furniture with, in winter, a stove which will warm up all the upper rooms of a moderately-sized house, and pay for itself and the fuel it consumes over and over again in the increased good health and comfort of the family.

A hall should be pleasantly but not glaringly lighted; and it is a great saving of carpets and the house-mother's feelings to have the floor made of alternate strips of dark and light wood, if the somewhat expensive process can be afforded.

BATH-ROOMS.

Bath-rooms, or good conveniences for bathing, ought to be found in every farm-house; and yet it is an unpleasant fact that they are often entirely lacking, and that a daily or semi-weekly "all over" bath is something undreamed of by many so-called civilized people who pride themselves upon their neat habits. This really religious duty of keeping the whole body clean does not occur to them, and the neglect of it is one of the numerous ways in which busy hard-working people abuse themselves.

Every villa, pretty country cottage, and first-class

farm-house now has its well-appointed bath-room, and so may the little three-cornered "shantie," or the log cabin of the pioneer, have its possibilities for bathing. If all cannot command a special room with its ample tubs, showers, douches, and convenient supplies of hot and cold water, all can have at least the seclusion of a closet—to which it is easy to carry a basin of water and a sponge.

A bit of a room might be built adjoining the kitchen with a sliding or hinged window opening near the cook-stove, thus securing warmth in winter and bringing the "hot and cold water" within arm's reach. Then with the addition of a bath-tub, or even a large laundry tub, with a piece of rubber hose fixed in the bottom to carry off water to the drain, pegs for hanging towels and sponges, and a bracket for holding soaps—and that better than all soaps, a bottle of ammonia—it is a bath-room good enough for a king.

A very good shower-bath can be had by suspending a watering-pot from a strong hook in the ceiling, the bather to regulate the showering by means of a string attached to the spout. It will be found almost as satisfactory as the portable ones sold in house-furnishing shops.

VENTILATION.

In the country where the purest air can be had, it is a pity to be denied the benefit of it.

In kitchens and living rooms the air is generally passable because of the frequent opening of outer doors and the brisk draught of cooking and heating stoves. It only remains to see that the bedrooms are equally well treated, and that too many pairs of lungs are not required to breathe in the same apartment. The windows should of course be made to let down from the top, as even a small opening near the ceiling of a room permits the escape of foul air.

An open stove is an excellent feature in a bedroom, not only because it helps vastly to maintain a pure state of atmosphere, but because it makes pleasant light and warmth for the dressing, undressing and bathing of the children. Even if kitchens and dining-rooms must be scrimped a little, endeavor to have the bedrooms, at least the nursery-bedroom, large enough to admit a stove of this sort. Like the hall stove, it will pay largely.

There is a "Revolving Ventilator" sold at house-furnishing shops, at one dollar and upwards, which is said to be very effective in removing dust and impurity from an apartment. The following method of cheap and simple ventilation has also been found to be very satisfactory:

"Nail or screw a neat strip of wood from one to two inches upon the window sill just inside the sash and extending across the window. Upon the top of the strip fasten a piece of "weather-strip" so that there will be formed an air-tight joint between the weather-strip and the lower sash of the window, whether the latter is closed or raised an inch or two—the lower cross-piece of the sash sliding on the rubber of the weather-strip as the sash rises. With this simple fixture in place, the lower sash may be raised enough to admit a stream of air between the lower and upper sashes, where they overlap, without admitting the least air at the bottom of the window. The air thus entering is thrown upward toward the ceiling, and has its "chill taken off" before descending upon the heads of the occupants of the room. The fixture, with its outlet in or near the ceiling for vitiated air, ventilates a small room very satisfactorily."

If it can be afforded, submit this feature of building to some intelligent architect, and secure your pure air on the latest scientific principles, but if the purse is limited, see that all bedrooms and sitting-rooms have some of the foregoing simple arrangements. Have, if possible, the open fire. A bedroom is never what it ought to be, if in

the morning it has to unvitiated lungs a close, stale, "sleepy" atmosphere.

Let the builder and the "provider" do their part, and the intelligent mother, having the welfare of her dear ones at heart, will see that they have good "lung food" on which to thrive through the long nights.

DRAINAGE AND PREVENTABLE FILTH.

The cleanly care of the body and the ventilation of rooms avail not so much, however, if about the house there creep and crawl the invisible but none the less terrible impurities from damp, mouldy cellars, standing pools of slop-water, and neglected, barbarous privies.

"How long we might live" exclaims Dr. Nichols, "if we could only get out of our dirt and that of our neighbors!" In the better part of large cities people seem to have succeeded very well in "getting out"—thanks to the rigid enforcement of sanitary laws!—and although a clogged-sewer pipe has power to transform the most elegant mansion into an intolerable dwelling place, it remains for the country to furnish horrors that would cause a sanitarian's hair to stand on end.

The cheering thing about this rural disregard for health laws is that it seems to be an unconscious disregard, a sin of thoughtlessness. The tasteful and thrifty farmer has his fences, outbuildings, and walks, in faultless repair, while in-doors his wife scrubs and polishes, and is a marvel of order and neatness; and yet some villainous cesspool brewing its mischief in the insulted air, or some repository of filth—emboweled it may be, in luxuriant vines—breathes out its poison day and night, and mocks the orderly care of the farmer and the tidy pride of his good wife with its unspeakable pollution.

Could the farmer be permitted to encounter these air-poisons in tangible shape, could he, for instance, catch a glimpse of diphtheria peeping into the sleeping-room of

his beloved little ones, or scarlet fever dogging their steps, or typhoid threatening the wife of his heart, would he not employ every means to avert them.

There is no excuse for bad "gases" about country homes. Every owner of an acre of land has the means at hand for maintaining a clean atmosphere, providing of course there are no unconquerable marshes or miasmatic rivers to deal with.

The various kinds of tiles for drains for conveying away slops and waste waters to points where they may be speedily evaporated by wind and sun, are durable, effectual, and cheap. Placed below the reach of frost at a pitch to create a rapid flow, they will not become clogged and will last a life-time.

In summers the laundry suds can be applied to the garden with good effect, but there should be a kitchen sink connecting with the drain not only for convenience in disposing of waste water at all times, but to prevent the nuisance of frozen slops and ice-clogging, which generally occurs when the only opening is outside the house. This kitchen pipe can be easily "flushed" every week with boiling suds, and a semi-occasional dose of chloride of lime or carbolic acid will keep it clean and odorless.

Kitchen waste in the country very fortunately need not await the round of the garbage cart, and can be disposed of at any time before it becomes rancid and pestilential. Indeed, in well-conducted house-keeping it is not "waste" at all, but wholesome scraps that are well received by the chickens, the pigs, and the soap-fat jar. The little that cannot be disposed of in these ways should be burned. There is nothing better than cremation for stuff that from neglect or accident becomes unfit for anything else.

These two sorts of refuse being so easily disposed of, the serious thing to consider is the last and the worst, the

old-fashioned privy ; old-fashioned, because in ever new first-class, scientifically builded house it has given place to something better. This nuisance is too philosophically endured. It is by no means a necessary evil, and there is no virtue in submitting to its existence. We often see heroic attempts to overcome its objectionable features. It is made to stand afar off, but distance in this case lends no enchantment, and the long walks back and forth in all sorts of weather, and the noisome condition of the building itself, are often serious exposures to aged people and delicate children. Sometimes it is brought nearer, taken under the house-roof, curtained and carpeted, and then we have "sewer gas" all the year round, and in the summer months a nuisance that more or less contaminates the whole house.

The best way to overcome this evil is to adopt the dry-earth or ashes system. Because some of the first closets manufactured on this principle proved rather unsatisfactory, no one should be prejudiced against the system itself, which is finding wide and wider acceptance through improved and perfected machinery.

In the use of dry earth or ashes, one is as effectual as the other, the only difference being that double the quantity of ash is required. Both, if properly used, have power to completely disinfect and obliterate everything that is offensive. To save the small trouble of drying and storing earth for winter use, it might be well to use ashes through the cold months, but the ease with which earth can be had in the country, and the excellent fertilizing purpose to which it can be put after it has performed its office of disinfectant, make it the most desirable.

The "earth closets" sold by dealers are needlessly expensive, I think, ranging in prices from the \$5 pail up to the \$40 cabinet elaborately finished in walnut. Beyond \$10 and \$12 they vary in value merely in regard to finish, and a man with any gift for planning and joining boards

might make one for the comparatively small cost of materials.

There is also a privy fixture intended for either house-closets or out-door buildings. It conveys dry earth or ashes into the vault from a reservoir of any size chosen, and as a disinfectant is just as effectual as the high-priced closet. The removal of deposit from a vault is, however, not as easily accomplished as in the closet arrangement, which merely requires an occasional emptying of a small box. But in adopting the fixture the building can of course be remodelled with a little labor. The fixture is sold by closet-dealers and accompanied with directions enabling any carpenter to fit it into place. Any common privy can be made quite decent and inodorous by having a little dry earth shoveled into the vault every day, and the vault occasionally emptied. A box or barrel of earth can be kept in a corner of the building, and a very little answers the purpose.

No privy should be used as a receptacle for slops. Often in villages and in the country they are, by this thoughtless usage, transformed into cesspools, whose far reaching poisons—poisoning not only the air, but descending into wells and cisterns—sooner or later bringing the doctor's carriage to the door, followed perhaps by that still more sombre vehicle, the plumed hearse.

With good drains, means for promptly disposing of all slops, garbage, and decaying matter, the dry-earth principle applied to the rank offenses just alluded to, pure water, and plenty of sun and air in all the apartments of the house, the farmer may safely count on having secured the best of "life policies" not only for himself, but for every member of his family.

CHAPTER II.

FINISHING.

There is a good deal of light, but effective, work in the finish of a house which women might interest themselves in, and, with a little study and practice, perform with their own hands the labor that is either left undone or given over to high-priced workmen.

I am confident a happy change would come over our farm-houses if the wives and daughters, dwelling in them, would take upon themselves the business of studying tasteful yet inexpensive ways for improving and embellishing their surroundings.

The work of painting, panelling, calcimining, staining, varnishing, etc., is not nearly as laborious as ironing shirts, molding bread, or scrubbing floors; and besides, when it is finished it remains finished, and, if well done, is a "joy forever."

Suppose the new house cleared of carpenters and masons, the floors and wood-work cleaned, and all the debris of building collected and carried away; the work that now remains to be done should be an attractive task for woman-hands, and it should be left to these hands, with confidence in their ability to make the very best of even the humblest materials.

The ceilings and walls are first to be considered. The mason may have left them smooth and white with the pride of his art, "hard-finish," but even this can be improved. In best rooms it is cold and glaring to the eye, while in every-day apartments, in spite of watchful care, it soon becomes unsightly from its ability to show every slight speck and spot. There are various soft and cheerful tints far more pleasing to look upon, and which will

longer endure the touches of time. The tints can be applied in calcimine or in whitewash, made after the following recipes. Calcimine is used only on hard-finish, while whitewash can be applied to all walls :

CALCIMINE.

Soak one pound of white glue over night, then dissolve it in boiling water, and add twenty pounds of Paris white, diluting with water until the mixture is of the consistency of rich milk. To this any tint can be given that is desired.

Lilac.—Add to the calcimine two parts of Prussian blue and one of vermilion, stirring thoroughly, and taking care to avoid too high a color.

Brown.—Burnt umber.

Gray.—Raw umber, with a trifling amount of lamp-black.

Rose.—Three parts of vermilion and one of red lead, added in very small quantities until a delicate shade is produced.

Lavender.—Make a light blue and tint it slightly with vermilion.

Straw.—Chrome yellow, with a touch of Spanish brown.

Buff.—Two parts spruce or Indian yellow and one part burnt sienna.

Blue.—A small quantity of Prussian blue will give a soft azure tint. Dark blue is never desirable.

Delicate tints in the foregoing varieties of color are always agreeable and tasteful, and so great care must be taken that they are not too vivid. The tints will always appear brighter than in the calcimine pot, and the workman, or work-woman, must keep this fact in mind when adding the coloring powders.

It is a good idea to give the ceiling a calcimine two or three shades lighter than that of the walls, so it may appear merely a delicate reflection of their deeper tones. The ceiling can be calcimined with the lighter tint, and then more coloring added for the walls.

AN EXCELLENT WHITEWASH.

For other walls than hard-finish, an excellent whitewash is made by slaking lime with boiling skim-milk and adding (for half a bushel of lime) three quarts of salt, half a pound of whiting, and a pound of white glue, previously dissolved in water. This is a hard and durable whitewash, does not easily rub off, and when tinted with any of the foregoing shades has about as good an effect as calcimine.

A beginner in the art of whitewashing is apt to bestow half the material on the floor, which is a needless waste. By taking a small quantity on the brush at a time all splashing is avoided, and after a little practice barely a drop will fall on the floor.

A bright day should be selected for the work. The wash must be of the proper consistency—rich milk—or it cannot be applied evenly. The strokes should be straight and parallel with each other. After the first coat is dry, and never before, apply the second one across the first. An expert workman leaves no touch of the brush visible. When applying the first coat a round paint-brush should be used for thoroughly covering all corners and small spaces with the wash.

BORDERS.

If a lady has a little talent and a little leisure for the work, she may devote an hour or two each day to the coloring of borders at the top of these tinted walls. A leafy pattern in grape, ivy, or other trailing vines, with a

bright bud or berry peeping out here and there, could be outlined with the aid of pasteboard patterns, and the colors neatly laid on with small brushes. A few feet of this bordering finished each day, would be no great tax on her time, and when all was completed she would have a charming artistic relief for the plain, softly-tinted walls.

Such decoration should not be attempted, however, unless one has a genuine "knack" for it; but in its place can be laid on plain bands of color, or the common paper borderings can be used, taking pains to select those that will have an agreeable effect. For example, for gray and stone-colored walls, use warm reds and golden greens; for bluish walls, dark blues and blue-greens, brightened with either lemon-yellow or rose-pink; for lavender or lilac walls, borders of golden-yellow and rich green; for buff and pale brown and straw-tinted walls, black and gold, with scarlet.

Very rich and beautiful designs are now seen in wall-papers, the prevailing idea being imitations of the tapestries of olden times—tapestries that probably never figured very much in farm-houses, however; and it is likely these papers would seem out of place on walls that are at their best when they are genuinely plain and unassuming, and adorned in a manner befitting quiet rural surroundings.

WOOD-WORK.

Walls of kitchens and dining-rooms are generally finished in wood to the height of two and a half or three feet from the floor. This is a good style, not only because it saves the breaking and marring of plaster, but because it gives a look of comfort and solidity to the apartments. Halls, and even parlors, might be finished in the same way, and thus add to the warmth of the

house and make wall-papering and other decoration an easier and less expensive operation.

An excellent way to dispose of the wood-work in kitchens, dining-rooms, halls, and pantries, is to oil and varnish the natural wood. Such treatment is more durable and less expensive than paint, and the varnished surface is easily cleaned, and enriched and mellowed, rather than damaged, by time.

If preferred, a walnut-stain can be applied in dining-rooms and halls, in place of oiling the wood. The stain can be bought at a drug store ready for applying, or it can be made by stirring the powder of burnt umber into hot vinegar, regulating the quantities according to the amount of surface to be stained. Apply it with a paint brush, evenly in up and down strokes, and when dry varnish with the best turpentine varnish.

Mahogany color for staining book-shelves, tables, drawers, chests, etc., is obtained by using burnt sienna in place of umber.

If one has time—and it is worth while to take time—a very neat hall floor can be made by staining alternate boards with walnut-color and then varnishing the whole.

Or the floor may be stained in blocks by tacking down alternate six or eight inch squares of pasteboard and applying the stain between them.

This inexpensive treatment is also desirable for dining-room floors—especially for borderings around them, since a happy fashion in carpets nowadays is to lay them in the form of large rugs, leaving a space of two and a half or three feet on all sides of the room.

One charm of this style lies in the fact that the carpets are easily taken up and cleaned without much moving or lifting of heavy furniture, which can remain on the boards next the wall. In a dining or any other much used room, these “rug” carpets are the only kind that should be endured; and in such rooms a wide bordering

of neatly stained blocks or stripes will prove to be not only pretty and cheerful, but a great saving of carpet-buying and carpet-sweeping.

If walnut-stain is thought too dark and sombre for parlor and bed-room wood-work, there are various delicate shades in paint that can be purchased of druggists or manufacturers already mixed, any one of which shades are preferable to hard, glaring white. Soft dove, wood, and pearl-gray tints, are desirable, and a room looks well when painted in two shades of the same color—providing the work can be done by an expert hand. Otherwise, let only one shade be attempted.

MANTELS.

A fire-place goes farther than anything else in giving to a room character and beauty. Every dining-room and nursery, at least, should have one. In the cool weather of spring and fall, when the morning and evening air is a little sharp, or when a long cold rain-storm is making everything “damp, moist and uncomfortable,” there is nothing more delightful, both for old and young, than a brisk fire upon an open hearth. With what beautiful rosy light and a gentle warmth it fills a room, and how it laughs and dances and seems to say to every one “be glad with me!”

And then, aside from its home-like beauty and good cheer, who can count the depressing chills and miasma, and floating seeds of disease, that are seized by its friendly flames and whirled up the chimney before they have time to lay a finger upon us?

Next to the wide windows and the bath-room, dear house-keepers, be sure to insist upon the fire-place in your house plans!

An “imitated” fire-place appears like one of the cruellest of shams; but if a real one cannot be afforded, a mantel is still a graceful and dignified feature of house-

finishing ; and an open stove selected from the several good and cheap ones now manufactured, will prove a very satisfactory substitute for the fire-place itself.

The mantel need not be expensive. A plain strong shelf placed about four and a half feet from the floor, with three pieces of pine arranged beneath it, something like the accompanying cut, is about all that is required of the carpenter in cases where dollars and cents must be



Fig. 11.

considered. The finishing and decorative touches are all within the power of some painstaking wife or daughter.

First nail a narrow molding along the edges, joining the corners neatly, and filling all nail holes with putty ; then paint the whole with good black paint, and when dry rub all over with emery paper or pumice-stone to remove any roughness, and apply another coat of paint. When dry, varnish. It can now be simply finished with a lambrequin for the shelf, and some sort of decorated fire-board, or it can be brightened up with tiles" in the following manner :

Take panels, or squares, of glass, and if one is not artist enough to venture on original designs, select pleasing pictures of birds, flowers, grains, children, animals,

or season-landscapes, from the great chromo-field, cut them out nicely and gum them upon the glass face downward, covering the whole with a coat of paint in soft shades of blue, lavender, or sea-green. The "right" side of the glass then bears a very fair resemblance to a china painting. These tiles are easily and inexpensively made, and when fastened upon the wood-work, with narrow black moldings, have almost as good an effect as those costlier ones "from over the sea."

For a fire-board take paper that will not quarrel with the prevailing color of the room, and paste it smoothly into the space between the wood-work and the mantel. This may be varnished and left plain, or a group of ferns, a wreath of autumn leaves, or a spray of "decalcomania" flowers may first be applied and then covered with two coats of varnish. If neatly and tastefully done this will agreeably brighten up an otherwise plain mantel.

If one is so fortunate as to possess a long narrow mirror, of the sort that, with a green halo of asparagus boughs about them, used to adorn our grandmothers' best rooms, it can be placed lengthways upon this mantel, neither tipped backward nor forward, but fastened flatly to the wall; and the effect will be excellent. The frame, doubtless more or less tarnished, will require a rubbing with sand-paper and a coat of black paint and varnish like the mantel; or it may be necessary to reframe it in black molding of a width to make it as long as the shelf on which it rests. If one has no such mirror, it will not cost a great sum to purchase one, without frame, and fit it into place. It will reflect the sunlit windows by day, and the lamps by night, and greatly increase the beauty and cheerfulness of the apartment.

HALL WINDOWS.

If there are glass panels in the hall-door, or windows above or beside it, there are ways for making them orna-

mental as well as necessary. They should not only be pleasing to outside inspection, but have a pretty and cheery look from within. By taking sheets of white tissue paper of the size of the panes, cutting out some flowery or geometrical design in the center, and pasting smoothly upon the glass, you have something of the effect of ground glass. Another way is to cut leaves and blossoms, birds and butterflies, from gay furniture calico or cretonne, paste them on the glass—the right side toward the light—in wreaths or groups, and cover them with white net, tarleton, or thin book-muslin cut to exactly fit the panes.

Autumn leaves, vines, and ferns, could be used in place of the cretonne figures if not exposed to strong sun-light—which would soon bleach them to anything but an attractive “living green.”

Any window from which the outlook is not desirable, but from which light is wanted, may be decorated in this way and so become a pleasing object in itself.

CHAPTER III.

FURNISHING.

What woman, unless she is a Laplander, or wealthy enough to know no wish denied, but has her day-dreams in which she furnishes this or that room after her own heart, and makes her house so beautiful—to her own mind at least—that waking from her dream-work she sighs over the limitations of her purse, and looks wearily about upon the plain, perhaps shabby things that must “do” until that indefinite period, Better Times, can replace them with something more desirable.

Now, for the benefit of these unsatisfied home-mothers, ingenious thinkers—women who have time to think—have hit upon many tasteful, cozy, and yet inexpensive ways for making rooms to appear very well furnished; so that even without the upholsterer’s aid, or the stockpiling of money so vainly waited for, their apt sisters have only to set to work at once and have surroundings more to their liking.

It is not worth while to sigh any longer for the marble-topped tables, flaming carpets, and slippery hair-cloth chairs which neighbor Luckyhand has had so long in his parlor, for they are “out of fashion,” and you should beware that no desperate local dealer induces you to take similar goods “at cost,” that he may be rid of them. With the small-patterned and small-priced ingrain carpets now in market, and plenty of good and cheap pictures offered on every hand, it will be found that a few yards of pretty chintz, a little furniture-gimp, and maybe a little paint and varnish, will go farther in furnishing a room tastefully and comfortably than a whole “set” from the upholsterer’s—and cost, of course, a great many dollars less.

The Spare Bedroom, the Boys' Room, and even the Parlor—which maybe has long been a draw-back to happy existence because of its scanty and unlovely furniture, may all be made quite nice and cozy at such a small outlay of money that it is not really wise to wait any longer for the more splendid things that may never come.

Let us begin first with Bedrooms, for no matter how one may yearn to place every pretty thing where it will make the most display, an honest house-keeper will scrimp parlor and dining-room before adorning them at the expense of sleeping-rooms—just as a genuine lady will have good and neatly made underclothing rather than outside silks and velvets, if her purse will not admit of both.

THE SPARE BEDROOM.

If one has good bedding and a pretty bedstead for this room, the expense of additional furnishing will be quite light. If these are lacking, then it is a more serious affair. If furniture can be bought unpainted directly from the factory or shop where it is made, it can be had at comparatively low figures. Send to the manufacturers for a catalogue, if you are too far from them for a personal call, select something in pine or whitewood, and trust to your genius and the paint-pot for a respectable bedstead, and some sort of small table for lamp, books, etc.

First decide what the color or tone of the room shall be, and paint the furniture accordingly. If it is a north room, I suggest a delicate peach or a straw color; if a south room, a soft blue, sage-green, or pale lilac.

Suppose a light pink decided upon. Let the wood-work be painted with white paint, in which has been stirred enough vermilion powder to make a tint not deeper than that of a blush rose. A room having but one door and a window or two, presents so little wood

surface that perhaps nice paint and an outer coat of varnish can be afforded.

For the walls select a light gray paper of a small flowery or geometric pattern, without color, with a border of pink roses and golden-green leaves, or of any other pretty design in these colors. A cheap paper of modest pattern and neatly put on, has quite as good an appearance as the more expensive sorts, and there is less arsenic in its composition for poisoning the air.

For the windows, plain bleached cotton shades, with a bordering of pink "chambrière" stitched on in bias bands, will look neatly. Or lambrequins may be made of the chambrière, with pinked ruffles about the edge and across the top. Fashion journals generally send lambrequin patterns for twenty or twenty-five cents, and it is worth while to have a graceful pattern, if any. Beneath these lambrequins nothing can be prettier in the way of inexpensive fabrics than book-muslin, made to hang in ample folds, the bottoms of the curtains just clearing the floor, and finished with a wide hem. In place of book-muslin, plain bleached cotton cloth—the lighter in quality the better—can be used, with two bands of pink chambrière stitched across six inches from the bottom.

For the floor there is nothing more cheerful or more serviceable, or freer from dust, than straw matting. It is also cheap, compared with other carpetings. Directions are given for making inexpensive carpets of wall-paper, but the process seems a tedious and not a very money-saving one. First, the floor must be covered with cotton cloth sewed together in breadths and tucked down very smoothly; this is to be covered with a coating of glue or thick flour paste. Upon this is laid the wall-paper, and upon the wall-paper two coats of varnish, when the "cheap" carpet is completed. In the long run, a good white matting would prove much less expensive, besides being more grateful both to vision and touch.

But if the latter is beyond the house-keeper's purse, she can give the floor a border of paint two shades darker than that of the gray wall-paper, and cover the center with a large rug of some home-made sort. Or the whole floor might be covered with the well-known "rag" carpeting, if enough of pink and gray rags could be evolved for such a fabric. Balls of pink, and balls of gray, loosely twisted together and woven with black warp, would make a neat, appropriate, and very durable carpet at a cost, including weaving, of less than twenty or twenty-five cents per yard.

A pair of handsome and luxurious rugs can be made by lining two white lambs' pelts with suitable material and placing a pleating of pink merino or flannel under the edges.

Pretty rugs, especially for summer use, are made of Turkish towelling (a soft, shaggy, cotton goods), lined with some heavier material and tied with tufts of pink zephyr or worsted. One yard of the yard-wide towelling makes two rugs. One should be placed before the toilet table and the other beside the bed. They are easily washed, and have a dainty and comfortable appearance in a sleeping room.

A very important item is a good bed. If you cannot have a spring wire-mattress, a tick filled with soft, clean corn-husks is one of the best foundations for a bed. Over this, in summer, place a light mattress of cotton or wool. In winter very few will be found objecting to a soft, well-cared-for feather-bed, particularly when the thermometer indicates large figures below zero. Pillows about two feet long and eighteen inches wide are of good size, both for use and looks. If feathers are scarce, I have known quite delightful pillows made of "new-mown hay," cut while the grass is young, with a handful or two of sweet clover or vanilla grass to enhance its agreeable fragrance.

It is a pleasing fashion nowadays to have some color about a bed in place of plain white. Counterpanes of colored silk and satin are, of course, very elegant, but they would be out of place in the simple appointments of a farm-house bedroom. French dress cambric—a fine, glossy goods, costing about thirty cents a yard, and sold in all shades—makes very pretty counterpanes when thinly wadded and nicely quilted in diamonds with a sewing machine. In this room the color chosen should, of course, be pink, and the stitching should be done with precision.

For pillow and sheet-shams select heavy bleached cotton cloth, and make up with a wide hem and cambric ruffles. The pillow-shams should be only the width of the ruffle larger than the pillows, and the sheet-sham wide enough to turn down two feet, or about one-third the length of the bed. The sheets and pillow-cases may have simply wide hems, as, if they are neatly made and white as snow, they are quite beautiful enough. They should be kept in a drawer with bags of rose-leaves, lavender, or the aromatic sweet briar, and not put on the bed until wanted, when they should be well aired to remove even the faintest suspicion of dampness. Fragrant snow-white “bed-linen” is within the reach of almost the poorest housewife in the world, and makes the plainest bed an inviting couch.

In the winter, that comfortable article, a foot-blanket, for wrapping up the feet on cold nights, can be made of two yards of white flannel, bound about the edges with pink cambric or ribbon. It should be folded and placed across the foot of the bed.

A common dry-goods box of the right size, when prettily covered, makes a much more satisfactory toilet table than anything that can be had under five dollars at the furniture dealers. Select a box of a suitable height, about three feet long and twenty-eight inches wide.

Let the open side come in front, to be lined with paper and used as a receptacle for slop-jar, etc. Nail a strip of board, six inches wide and three feet long, to the top of the box next the wall. Buy a piece of plain white or marbled oilcloth, long enough to cover this, and the top of the box, and put it on neatly, bringing the edges low enough that no tacks will be displayed. Cover the ends of the box also with paper. Then line some coarse book-muslin with pink paper-cambric and drape it upon the box sufficiently full to hang gracefully. Make a narrow plaiting or ruffling of muslin and place it around the top and down the opening in front, where the ends of the curtain or "valance" must overlap. The mirror, which should be at least two feet long—a larger one being, of course, all the better—must rest upon the oilcloth-covered board that forms the back of the table, and have its frame covered with a ruching of the pink-lined muslin. At either side of the bottom of the mirror place small brackets, covered and draped with tiny lambréquins of muslin and cambric. They can be made of cigar-boxes, or any light, thin wood, and will afford a place for small vases and cologne bottles. Then with pink and white mats for wash-bowl and pitcher, a pretty pin-cushion, and one or two boxes (for brushes and combs), covered with cambric and muslin, this important item of furniture is completed.

And now the husband or the big boy of the household must make a lounge frame. No matter how roughly it is put together, if it is only reliably strong and stands squarely on its legs. It should be about twenty-eight inches wide, and not more than sixteen inches high; if higher it will lose its comfortable look, and have the appearance of being on stilts by the time the mattress is added. Nail slats across the top, and make a mattress for it of fine hay or oat straw. Then buy some calico, or percale, or dress cambric in pink and white stripes, and

make a cover and valance for the lounge, also covering a large square pillow to place at one end. Seven yards of cambric or percale will be sufficient, but if calico is used two or three yards more will be needed. If one is dependent on a small country store for supplies, it may be necessary to order by mail from the nearest city. No other cheap goods will look as well.

Any old second-hand "light-stand," or similar article of furniture, can be transformed into a comely little table by giving it two coats of the rose-colored paint and a final one of varnish. Perhaps a handsome cluster of roses or lilies can be applied to the center.

It will be thought that the purchase of chairs cannot be avoided; but wonders can be done with the paint-pot and two old kitchen chairs, and perhaps the big boy just mentioned can make a frame for a large easy chair. He must be sure to have the seat broad and low, and the back at just the right angle. A little hay and four yards of percale and ingenious fingers will accomplish the rest, and, with a foot-stool, nothing more is needed in this line.

By all means have a stove in this room, since even the warmest hospitality can hardly counteract the chill attendant on going to bed in a fireless room in January! To save the trouble of storing it in summer, it might be allowed to remain in the room the year round, decorated with evergreens and other cool foliage during those months when a fire is not needed.

And now do not disfigure these pure walls with a lot of hap-hazard, meaningless pictures and fussy fancy work! Bedroom walls, as well as others, should be serene. It is enough to have a pair of good engravings, or good chromos, and a "motto" that has some appropriateness about it—for instance, "At Evening-time There Shall be Light," "Let Not Your Heart be Troubled,"

“Happy Dreams and a Glad To-morrow”—something calming and hopeful.

Blue, sea-green, and lilac, combined with white or gray, are all beautiful colors for bedrooms, and with taste and ingenuity an inviting apartment can be made out of inexpensive materials.

THE BOYS' ROOM.

The Boys' Room is often much neglected in the way of a little painstaking adornment, particularly in country homes. I could never see clearly why all the pretty things should gravitate to the rooms occupied by the girls, while the boys' room goes almost as bare as the ancient cupboard of Mother Hubbard.

If the girls are to have a blue room, or a lilac room, let the boys also have a room distinguished by color. A housewife, without great outlay, can “individualize” all bedrooms in this way. If everything cannot be done at once, what is done can be in accordance with a special design.

Let the boys have a room where the sunlight comes in, and let the walls be attractively tinted, and the floor nicely painted, with large, comfortable rugs before beds, toilet-stands, and bureaus; and, out of regard for the masculine mind's hatred of things that need constant replacing, have these rugs securely tacked down!

Then there should be a good bed—or beds, if there are more than two boys—with plump pillows and counterpanes to match the color of the room. Common glazed cambric, thinly wadded and neatly quilted, looks very nicely, and if properly cared for will remain bright and unsoiled for years.

A model house-keeper of my acquaintance has a large, airy room for her three boys which is very pleasant to look upon, and yet its appointments cost very little. The walls are covered with a bluish-gray paper, with a

bright border of blue-flag blossoms and rich green leaves. The wood-work and the floor for a yard's width about the room was painted, by the oldest boy, a light lead color, at a cost of a dollar and a half. The center of the floor is covered with a large, square, braided rug of black and gray rags, with a square of blue in the middle, and there are smaller rugs of similar pattern before the bureau and the toilet-table.

The two windows on opposite sides of the room are hung with graceful lambrequins of blue and gray calico that cost six cents a yard, being of extra quality !

A solid, oblong kitchen table, with neat lead-colored legs and a cover of gray linen, bordered with blue—which I mistrust is kept in place by the big Dictionary and a large book of birds—stands in the center of the room, and above it is suspended a hanging lamp, particularly bright and shining, although it is set in just a square of board with a wire running up from each corner. A fleecy frilling of blue tissue paper conceals the board, and the plain little lamp becomes a pretty feature in the room.

There are three "cot" beds at one end of the apartment. Each has a corn-husk mattress (with, in winter, another of wool), an oat-straw pillow, neat, plain shams, and a woven blue and white counterpane, like those of olden times.

The somewhat elongated toilet-table—for it must accommodate three boys, who generally must dress at the same time—is made from a packing-box and neatly draped with the blue and gray print. Above it is a long mirror, placed lengthwise, and there are brush and comb boxes for each boy.

In one corner stands a large wardrobe for clothes, and opening from the room is a small closet, warmed in cold weather by a pipe from the winter-kitchen stove, and containing conveniences for washing and bathing.

The walls have two very good chromo landscapes, framed by the boys. A deer's head and an old Indian hatchet hang among the guns and fishing-tackle, that give a vigorous boyish tone to the room. Over the door is a lovely thing—to my eyes: a motto done with water-paints and by young hands, but it is easy enough to read the words “REMEMBER MOTHER” among its gay leaves and blossoms. And in this home “mother” is remembered, and she has always remembered her boys.

It does not follow that every farm-house mother must have a large room with a blue-counterpaned bed for each boy, although I would strongly recommend the arrangement, with a variation of color! “Individual” beds are not only more conducive to health, but in this case they do away with a great deal of the characteristic pinching and squabbling of nocturnal boyhood! They make a little more washing, to be sure, but the sheets are small and easily laundered.

I quote this room to show that it is not much more trouble to have things comfortable and harmonious than it is to have them the reverse. The three boys might have been pitched into this room—if I may be permitted the expression—with one bed, a broken looking-glass, a three-legged chair, and a shelf for a tin candle-stick, with their only chance for washing and bathing offered by the kitchen sink or the mill-pond. But I do not believe they would have liked this room for a reading-place, or a studio, or been proud to invite their mates there, or that they would have worked so laboriously to create that blessed motto over the door.

The chief beauty of any room, whether richly or plainly furnished, is its purity and orderliness; and the Boys' Room needs daily attention to make it a place they will look back to in after years with the keenest and tenderest memories. How many grown-up hearts there are who can say, with Hood:

I remember—I remember
The house where I was born,
The little window where the sun
Came peeping in at morn.
He never came a wink too soon,
Or brought too long a day,
But now I often wish the night
Had borne my breath away!"

We will not believe that HOOD really wished to die—for there was nothing in his good life to make him tired of earth—but he was tenderly in earnest when he recalled the scenes of his early days, even to the "little window," through which the sun smiled him Good Morning, and the lilac-tree "where the robin built." Youth is such a rose-tinted time that perhaps a bedroom window looking out upon a chaotic back-yard, and looking in upon a room with battered walls, a lumpy bed and a couple of weak-legged chairs, would be something sweetly remembered in after years; but I am inclined to doubt it. A window, brushed by the boughs of a lilac, or an apple-tree, with its sweet blossoms and humming bees, and beyond it glimpses of hill and valley and the radiant sky, is the window for the Boys' Room, and there should be pleasant little touches of beauty and comfort within that need cost hardly anything but motherly thoughtfulness.

If help is scarce in the house, and the mother's hands are full, it may not be out of place in this subject of "furnishing" the Boys' Room, to suggest here that the boys can assist in keeping it in order. They can make beds and sweep floors with the most admirable neatness and dispatch, because their arms are so strong and their feet are not impeded by the long skirts the poor mother is doomed to wear. If a boy is ashamed to be seen doing "girl's work," let him be more ashamed still of being an unmanly shirk, and letting his over-burdened mother do for him work that he has time and ability for doing himself. I know a boy, keen and bright enough to be a

future President, and plucky enough to win more wolf-bounty in his county last winter than any two men hunters, who can put a room to rights, cook a beefsteak, and set the table for dinner, as quickly and daintily as any woman, without any apparent loss of self-respect, or the least bit of damage to his gritty young manhood.

THE OLD PEOPLE'S ROOM.

If you are so fortunate as to have the "Old People" in the house, see to it that they have its warmest and sunniest corner, and a goodly portion of the best that can be afforded of comfort, convenience, and beauty—that aged blood may be kept warm and cheerful, that failing limbs may have restful repose, and that the dim eyes that have watched over you and yours through so many toilsome years, may see around them the ever present evidences of faithful and grateful care.

There is nothing in the world more pathetic than the meek, timorous, shrinking ways of certain old people—we have all seen them—who have given up their old home into younger hands and subsided into some out-of-the-way corner of it, to sit by fireside and at table henceforth as if they were mere pensioners—afraid of "making trouble," afraid of being "in the way," afraid of accepting the half that is their due, and going down to their graves with a pitiful, deprecating air, as if constantly apologizing for staying so long!

There is no scorn too deep and sharp for the sons and daughters who will accept this attitude on the part of those to whom they owe so much!

Sometimes, to be sure, people grow old with a bad grace. They become embittered by misfortune, or affliction, or are peevish and unreasonable under the goadings of ill-health. All the more do they appeal to great gentleness and faithfulness. Let it be borne in mind that we, too, are hastening on toward the sunset of life, and that it is pos-

sible we may ripen into very uncomfortable old people, to demand much more of patience and devotion than we as children yield.

The Old People's room should be as pleasant and homelike as possible. Let the old-fashioned furniture and the old-fashioned ways prevail in it. I think no one thing could delight the old hearts more than an open fire-place, with some ancient andirons, and a crane with its pendant tea-kettle! These fire-places are rapidly becoming extinct, but to most old people living in the present generation they would be radiant with pictures of youth and early love. A fire like this is not only a delight to the aged, but a pleasant care. How the old mother, who was such a thrifty housewife in her "day," enjoys polishing the brass heads of the fire-dogs, brushing the tidy hearth, and brewing the special cup of tea in the little old pot that looks so entirely "at home" upon the glowing coals! And with what solicitude does grandfather prepare the wood and kindlings for this beloved hearth-fire! How he enjoys stretching his aged hands to the ruddy blaze, while he croons some quaint old hymn in concord with the singing kettle! What a vast amount of poking and reconstructing the sticks require, and how important it is that when the early, old-fashioned bedtime comes, there must be just the right sort of coals for the morning fire! Think of giving the Old People a grim looking, air-tight stove that swallows a huge chunk in the morning, and then, like an anaconda, requires nothing more until its big lunch is digested! Provide the stove, if the severity of climate demands it, but have the open fire for love's sake! Aside from the good cheer and the companionship which it offers, it swallows up the dust, assists to ventilate the room, and adds so much to the physical well-being of the occupants that it should be instituted for this reason alone—if its poetical side seems of little value.

It is essential that the Old People should have their own rooms, where their quiet and retirement can be held sacred. If there are but two rooms in the house, the grandfather and grandmother are entitled to one of them. The confusion of a "blue Monday," or the noisy overflow of animal spirits in children, may be very invigorating to younger nerves, but it is not always agreeable to the aged, who need a haven of peace and repose suited to the Indian Summertime of their lives. In this quiet corner let them gather about them the old and familiar treasures with which they began the world together—but be careful to add enough of "modern improvements" to insure their comfort and convenience. The old clock, the towering chest, the battered china, the dim oil-portraits, and even the "weeping-willow" lithographs—pathetic with the memory of the early lost—will seem like old and faithful friends to them; but let the old-fashioned draught under the door be shut out with a patent weather-strip, and the dim candles of the past be replaced by a cheerful lamp. A monthly rose and a chrysanthemum in one of the sunny windows will be another pleasant charge for grandmother, and a good book or a fresh newspaper should often find its way to the mantel beside grandfather's "spectacles."

It is well worth while to deny one's self many things rather than this room should be bleak and cheerless to these fading lives. All too soon will the fire go out on the hearth, and the old arm-chairs stand empty. It will be well for us then if no ghosts of reproach, no sad phantoms of lost opportunity, lean out of the chill and the silence to remind us of our deep sins of neglect and indifference! After all, the "good will" goes farther than the great deeds. The scant furniture, the plain dinner, and the last year's almanac for reading, will all be very pleasant and grateful to the Old People, if faithful love and cheerful devotion sweeten the atmosphere; and in a thousand

inexpensive ways can frugal living be tempered and softened to their needs.

MOTHER'S ROOM.

Every good home must have its "Mother's Room"—the pleasant half nursery, half sitting-room, that enfolds all the family in its affectionate atmosphere, and leads each member to feel that here at least is a bit of anchorage ground from every storm that blows.

In this room, also, let us all insist on sunlight and an open fire—things that go farther in furnishing an apartment than anything that can be found in the shops. Open stoves of different sizes and designs can be had at moderate cost. Some are designed to close into an airtight stove, whenever it is desired to "keep" the fire, but these are more expensive than the ordinary open grates, like the "Franklin."

There should be a lighted closet or small room opening from this apartment, containing a wardrobe and the conveniences for bathing and dressing. This is very essential—even in a primitively arranged farm-home—for sponges, towels, brushes, slippers, and the like, have rather more of prose than poetry in them, and no room can be properly used as a sitting-room where such very personal property manifest's itself. Banish these things to their legitimate place; but if the house is small, and sleeping-space limited, a bed can remain in the room, and if neatly made up, will add to rather than detract from its air of cozy comfort.

Since there must be a few healthy, blossoming plants in the east or south windows, and since dust is their natural enemy, it will be best to give the floor a three-foot border of paint or stain, and cover the center with a square of carpeting, which can frequently be taken up and cleaned with little time and labor.

If the windows have shutters for closing at night, they require very little drapery. Plain white shades, with a border matching the color used in furnishing the room, will look well, and in winter small, cornice-like lambrequins of a warm, bright tint might be added. Pale, sunshiny buff, with a touch of scarlet here and there—in borders, lambrequins, cushions, and the like—will give a bright and cheerful tone to this room, so that, even in stormy weather, it will have about it hints of fair skies. In ceiling and walls this tint is cheaply obtained in calcimine. The wood-work, if of clear pine, can be varnished without paint. If old and time-scarred, it had best be stained walnut-color, or oiled and varnished. The large square of carpet should be in a small leafy and mossy pattern, of dark and light brown, with a brown and scarlet border. Twelve yards, three breadths four yards long, will make an ample “rug” for a room twelve by fifteen feet, or even larger.

If there are some household purses that cannot afford even these twelve yards, let no one be heart-broken! I have known more than one charming, home-like room whose only carpet was of woven rags, or a glossy coat of “spruce yellow,” with a braided rug before its pleasant hearth.

Rag-carpeting, in the manufacture of which the whole family might join one or two evenings in each week, can be made so as to be quite tasteful, as well as substantial, and should be preferred to the cheap, easily worn and easily faded hemp and cotton-ingrain carpeting. For instance, if a carpet for this buff and scarlet room is lacking, color all the old white rags and white-ground calicoes a deep orange, sew them in balls by themselves, and then twist them with balls made of all colors, except red, which must be saved for the bordering. The twisting can be accomplished by winding a ball of each into one ball. Ten balls of orange, estimated at a pound each,

and ten balls of "hit or miss" colors of the same weight, will make at least fifteen yards of carpeting. After the breadths are sewn together, and the ends hemmed, braid together all the old red flannel and black woolen rags and sew them around the edge for a border. The result will be quite a neat and stylish floor-covering, of which no housewife need be ashamed, and costing much less time and labor than those dazzling rag-carpets in which "shaded" colors and "feather-stripes" abound.

Mother's Room must have a lounge—a lounge long enough and wide enough and soft enough for an after-dinner nap, and pretty enough to be ornamental, as well as of use. Like that in the spare room, the frame can be made at home and covered with any kind of material that will harmonize with the room. Take care to have the frame broad and low. Flowered buff and scarlet furniture calico, such as might be used for the lambrequins, or plain dark red, will make a pretty cover. After the frame is covered with stout sacking, securely nailed in place so as not to sag, tack on a valance of the chintz or calico, and make a mattress of the same, filling it with split corn-husks or nice straw, and tying it in large diamonds, using tufts of scarlet yarn for buttons. Around the edge of the mattress place a ruffle or box-plaiting that will fall over the top of the valance. Then make two good, generous cushions of either feathers or oat-straw, cover them with the material, sew a ruffle or plaiting about the edges, and the lounge is complete, except for a gaily striped afghan, or small, prettily pieced quilt, which should be folded and laid at the foot, as a convenience for covering the shoulders during a nap or when one is resting from fatigue.

A very comfortable easy chair can be fitted up by making a soft, thick cushion five feet long and eighteen inches wide, covering it with the lounge material, tying it also with tufts of yarn, and fastening it to the back

and seat of some old-fashioned wooden rocker, previously renewed with paint and varnish.

A low sewing chair (a kitchen chair with legs sawed off two inches) should be cushioned in the same way, and two soap boxes—one to contain rolls of sewing or mending, and the other the baby's playthings—can be cushioned so as to be comfortable little seats, and covered with the same goods.

There should be a substantial table for the center of the room—one on which children can lean over lessons or picture-books without fear of upsetting the structure. If one is not so fortunate as to possess some great-grandmother's mahogany or cherry-wood table, have a carpenter make one of pine, about three by four feet, with rounded corners and turned legs, and finish it at home with walnut-stain and varnish. Two yards of double-width dark-scarlet flannel, hemmed all around with machine stitching in silk, will make an elegant spread, or the table is very well without any covering, particularly for children's use or for evening games.

Above this table should be suspended a shaded lamp, to come down to a good reading or sewing level. It will impart a wonderfully pleasant and refined air to the room, give the best light, and be far safer than one that stands on the table.

There should be a paneled bedstead, either in real or imitation walnut, and its furnishing should be always neat and fresh in appearance. Farm-mothers should fight against the tendency, amid their many cares, to neglect their own personal belongings, and to think that they have no time for refined comforts. Smooth, white shams, plump pillows, pretty counterpanes, and lavender-scented sheets, are just as becoming to Mother's Room as to that of the occasional guest; and no more time is required to make up such a bed than one where everything is limp and disorderly.

Plain "Turkey-red" calico, or pale-buff cambric, or "chambrè" gingham, wadded and quilted, will make a suitable counterpane, and hems and ruffles will be sufficient finish for the shams, unless some neat-handed daughter is ready to put the mother's initials in the center with scarlet or buff embroidery cotton.

Regarding these shams, a farmer's wife once declared to me that she would have no "shams" in her house; that their very name was offensive, and that when her sheets and pillows were in such condition as to need hiding, she could throw them into the wash and provide clean ones.

Now, this is a bit of virtuous indignation altogether out of place. Where a bed is used every day the pillow-slips and the sheet that should turn down smoothly across the top, become, after the first using, not soiled, but rumpled, and covering them with smooth, crispy, ruffled "shams" that can be removed at night and kept immaculate for many weeks, is merely a praiseworthy attempt to make even the commonest things pleasing to the eye.

And now, with a small clock for the mantel-shelf, which should be placed no higher than your shoulder, a pleasant picture or two hung so as to be level with the eye when one is standing, a wall-basket for newspapers, and a rack for the children's and other books, the Mother's Room is ready for occupancy.

THE GIRLS' ROOM.

Most young girls take so instinctively to refining and beautifying their surroundings, that it seems almost superfluous to offer them any suggestions. A writer in one of our home journals speaks of a country girl of sixteen who, with nothing but her ingenious fingers and twenty yards of five-cent calico, made of her bedroom "a perfect bower of daintiness and purity."

Neatness and order are qualities to be had under any circumstances. Without them the choicest furniture cannot make an attractive room, and with them even the "loft" in a log cabin can be made cosy and comfortable.

Let us begin with the humblest country home and see what things can be done with a little money. Suppose the wood-work unpainted, the plaster rough or broken, the floor bare, the chairs and bedstead old and rickety, and the windows hung with rattling paper shades? This seems a dreary enough groundwork for any reasonable reformer. Let us commence with the walls and ceiling. If there are any broken places and the "men-folks" are too busy to attend to such repairs, a few cents' worth of plaster of Paris mixed with water and applied in haste, for it hardens instantly, will neatly mend the holes. Or the cracks in the lath can be filled with paper and then stout, white cloth smoothly pasted over. Then mix a whitewash, coloring it delicately with either Prussian blue, or vermilion, or yellow ochre, according to whether a blue, pink, or straw-color is desired, and do the ceiling, being sure to apply the last coat all in one direction with smooth, even strokes. Then add a little more of the coloring powder to make a deeper tint for the walls, and apply it until all stains or fractures no longer show. Stain the wood-work with burnt umber and hot vinegar after directions in the chapter on Finishing. These dry powders or paints are generally sold in drug stores, and are not expensive. They can be ordered by mail if need be.

For the windows, perhaps the skirt of some old-fashioned lawn or cambric dress can be fashioned into graceful lambrequins. Or a cheap calico, with a white ground and a pink or blue or buff flower or stripe, can be used for the purpose. Under these lambrequins place either plain curtains of bleached cotton to be rolled up on sticks, or long full ones of coarse book-muslin, if it can be afforded.

to be looped back at either side, and held in place by bows of ribbon, or bunches of pressed leaves.

Now arises the momentous question of a floor covering. Straw-matting is desirable, but it costs half a dollar, and more, a yard. Rag-carpeting would be neat, if made in blue or pink, or buff, mingled with gray; but it requires a good deal of time, a good deal of material, and there may be no weaver within fifty miles. The cheapest of "ingrain" is forty or fifty cents per yard, and fades easily, and is generally in ugly patterns. If the floor is smooth and close-jointed, and there is not much money to spend, I would send to some house-furnishing firm in the nearest city for a roll of wall-paper in a dark, rich "tile" pattern, which might cost, including postage, fifty or sixty cents. This I would paste smoothly around the floor next the walls as a border, taking pains to make neat joints in the corners, and when dry apply a coat of good varnish. Over the remainder of the floor tack down a carpet made of heavy unbleached cotton cloth, sewed in neat straight seams that will not draw or pucker, and bound all about the edges with a braid or cloth of a color to match that chosen for the room. Until seen on the floor no one can imagine how pretty and cheerful and thoroughly neat such a carpet appears. With care it can be used a whole summer without showing much soil, and when washed and tacked down again, is just as good as new. There should be gay little rugs of Turkish towel-ling or braided rags to place before bedstead and toilet table.

If the bedstead is some old dingy, creaking thing that would spoil all these efforts, let it be used for kindling wood; or what is better, let the father or the big brother make from it a stout frame three feet wide by five and a half in length, with slats nailed across the top, and not more than sixteen inches in height. Drape around it a white valance, and make for it a thick mattress of split

corn-husks or nice oat straw. Over this a thick comforter of cotton or wool. No matter how coarse and plain the sheets and pillow slips, if they are only beautifully white. And the pillows must be round and plump, though filled with nothing more costly than fine soft hay. The counterpane may be of white, with rounded corners at the foot—else it will not hang gracefully on such a bedstead. It and the shams may be trimmed with bias bands of blue or pink, or left plain white, as one chooses. Something will be added to the prettiness of this couch if a few yards of book-muslin, or of the lambrequin material, be fastened to an ornamental hook in the wall high above the head of the bed, and the ends made to fall gracefully at either side of it.

For a cheap toilet table, and one easily made, secure a large three-cornered piece of board—large enough to comfortably accommodate a wash bowl, pitcher, boxes, etc.—and fasten it into a corner of the room where the light is best. Cover it with suitably colored cambric, and tack around it a slightly full flounce of the same, long enough to reach the floor. Over this place plain book-muslin, with box plaitings across the edge and along the bottom. The frame of the mirror hanging above it should also be draped with cambric and muslin, together with a little bracket at either side. Common paper boxes covered with fancy paper or zephyr-work should be added, for holding brushes, combs, etc.

A long packing box of the right height, lined with paper, the cover hinged, and the whole neatly cushioned and draped with tastefully chosen calico, will make not only a pretty lounge, but an excellent place for keeping one's best dresses.

If one has no bureau, another box, not so long, might be fixed in the same way, with partitions added, making "a place for everything."

Saw off two or three inches from the legs of some old

kitchen chair, paint it jet black, and varnish; make a cushion for the seat and a square zephyr-tidy for the back, both of appropriate color, and a neat little sewing-chair is the result.

Trusting to the fates and girlish energy for a table with a shelf of books above it, and some pretty pictures and a motto for the walls, we will leave this room, feeling sure that even with these humble and inexpensive appliances, there is the chance for peaceful and pleasant hours within that are sometimes unknown in more magnificent apartments.

In homes where daughters have larger means to draw from, of course there will be no need of the make-shifts here mentioned. Delicately-toned paper can be chosen for the walls, pretty chintzes or cretonnes for the furniture, and a neat, white matting or lovely ingrain for the floor. But whatever the fittings of a girl's room may be, it is the girl herself that gives it character. If she is refined and orderly, and tasteful, her room will certainly be an attractive little bower, whether she has five dollars or fifty times five to devote to its adornment.

Two elements should never be forgotten, books and flowers! They are the best and the sweetest companions.

THE KITCHEN.

One of the finest house-keepers in the United States says: "If scrimping must be done, scrimp parlor and sitting-room, but have the kitchen and bedrooms as comfortable as possible." Another writer observes: "The kitchen is to the house what the stomach is to the body, and should be the most spacious, best lighted, and best ventilated apartment in the house." This remark, however, is aimed mainly at city homes, where the kitchen is too often a mere little basement cellar, badly lighted and illy supplied with pure air, from which it is no wonder

that the servants are continually rising to the upper regions to give "warning." In the country the average kitchen is far more decent, but still the erring house-keeper, anxious to "have things like other people," is prone to pinch the poor kitchen in order to furnish the parlor its gim-cracks.

This is all wrong. If one's house were intended for entertainment and continual festivity, then it would be well to place its parlor and dining-room first and foremost; but in a farm-house, where the house-mother's work lies mainly in kitchen and dairy, and where are needed all the aids and conveniences for making this work pleasant as well as profitable, it is simply silly to deny one's self valuable and useful every-day things for the sake of what-nots, upholstered chairs and Nottingham-lace curtains, that must necessarily be shut up and of no benefit to anybody nine-tenths of the year. It is as if some farmer, otherwise of sound mind, should deny himself reapers and seeders and good horses in order to keep himself well supplied with broadcloth, beaver hats, French boots, and fine linen!

However, if the country house-keeper would visit one of the large retail hardware establishments in the nearest big city, with money in her pocket, I have no fear that she would have very much cash or inclination left for mere "best room" adornments, for there is certainly no more captivating field offered to the eye of the homewoman than is found in this branch of house-furnishing. Before she has half surveyed the wonderful display of improvements in everything, from a magnificent cooking-range to a rotary nutmeg-grater, from an elegantly builded refrigerator to an apple-corer, from an oil-stove or a dish-washing machine to the last idea in clothes-lines and carpet tacks—she will feel that "hardware" is altogether too meagre a term to apply to such a world of beautiful and helpful things.

I wish such articles could find their way into every farm-house in the land, in place of the showy and useless rubbish that is so often toiled and struggled for at the expense of health and household happiness. A parlor appropriately furnished is always desirable; but a kitchen supplied with some modern conveniences and labor-saving implements, and so cheerfully arranged that to do work in it is a delight rather than drudgery, is of infinite more value, if a choice must fall between the two.

The room should be of good size, with windows on opposite sides, as they thus give a peculiarly cheerful light. It is a charming idea to have the windows set in after the manner alluded to in the Chapter on Building. They afford a generous view, and with sills about ten inches wide for flower-pots, and a cornice across the top for a little drapery, they are very delightful. The ceiling and walls should be whitened or calcimined in some cheerful tint, and the wood-work oiled and varnished. For the floor—if it is even, and of a decent quality of lumber—nothing is better than two or three coats of oil, put on one after the other as fast as absorbed. Such a floor needs no scrubbing, a weekly mopping with plenty of warmish water, being sufficient to keep it clean. Comfortable little rugs should be placed before the sink and the ironing table; and if this room must do duty as a dining-room, there should be, in winter, a large square of carpeting under the dining-table. A neat screen, made by tacking chintz or furniture calico upon a light wooden frame, about five feet high and six feet wide, might be placed between the table and the cook-stove, not only to temper the heat, but to shut off the not always attractive view of saucepans, spiders, and kettles used in the dinner-getting.

The sink should be capacious, lined with zinc, provided with drain-pipe, and flanked by pumps connecting with cistern and well. Underneath may be a cupboard for pots

and kettles, and above it a row of pegs on which to hang a dishcloth-holder, a stiff brush for cleaning vegetables, a little mop for washing bottles and narrow-necked pitchers and jars, the lamp scissors, and such small articles as are in daily use in this department of the kitchen. Two small shelves should be placed at either end for soap-dishes. A large conveniently arranged sink goes a great way in making kitchen-work easy.

A good-sized, substantial table of white-wood or pine is needed for ironing and baking days. It should have three drawers—a large one for ironing-sheets, shirt-board and holders, and two smaller ones for baking-tins, spoons and knives used in cooking, and boxes of spices, salt, etc. Having once used such a table, no house-keeper will like to do without it.

Above this table can be fastened a hanging rack for ironed clothes. These are much more convenient than the sort which stand on the floor, and when not in use, can be folded back against the wall, entirely out of the way.

For washing-days, are needed a long bench two and a half feet wide, and of the right height, two or three tubs, a wringer, and for heavy clothes, a washer. The latter, which costs \$5 or \$6, can be fitted into any tub, and ought to be an indispensable article. It is to washing-day what a reaping-machine is to an eighty-acre wheat field; and no farmer should neglect to provide one for his kitchen, unless he is willing to settle down to his harvesting with merely the sickle and the "cradle" of his forefathers! These items come under the head of kitchen furniture, but are, of course, kept in the cellar, or in a closet opening from the kitchen.

Along with a first-class cooking-stove, for it is not economy to have a poor one, should be selected the following quite necessary articles:—Wash-boiler, tea-kettle, soup-pot, frying-kettle, spider, two or three granitized

saucepans of different sizes, four bread-tins, two gem-irons, coffee and tea-pots, large and small iron spoons, wire steak-broiler, wire toaster, steamer, pudding-mold, patty-pans, potato-masher, skimmer, cream-whipper, gravy-strainer, egg-beater, half a dozen cake and pie tins, large and small graters, a dozen muffin-rings, or a muffin-pan, which is more convenient than the rings, a colander, a quart measure, and a griddle. No doubt other items will readily suggest themselves, but these, at any rate, are essential, if good house-keeping is the object. A proper and convenient place to keep them is a large deep-shelved cupboard with close doors, in which the common crockery and glass can also be kept.

The best arrangement is to have cupboard-room for all table and cooking ware, and keep food and provision stores in a cool, well ventilated closet, that can be effectually closed to dust and flies.

For china and glass, and ornamental dishes, a corner cupboard with glass doors, in the upper part, and two or three drawers below for table-cloths, napkins, and the children's bibs and clean aprons, will be found a treasure.

There should be a closet opening from the kitchen for every-day coats, hats, umbrellas, water-proof cloaks, and the like. Nothing makes a kitchen look so forlorn and disorderly as a lot of nondescript garments hanging here and there about the walls, together with bits of rope, whips, and other masculine clutter. There's a place for these things, but it is not on the walls of a pleasant and tidy kitchen. The closet just mentioned should be capable of ventilation, else overshoes and water-proofs will give it a too pronounced atmosphere.

An easy little rocking-chair, and a good arm-chair, should be stationed by the pleasant windows, where a tired baby can be "brooded" for a while, or a newspaper caught up for a moment's reading.

Notwithstanding the scorn that is heaped upon

“chromos” by those who can afford to buy real oil-paintings and choice engravings, there are far prettier and more pleasing pictures among them than among many of the “old masters,” and any city acquaintance or reliable dealer can send to our country homes soft-toned landscapes, and rich fruit and flower pieces, at a small expense, that will pleasantly relieve bare walls, and often give really beautiful effects. There are very good engravings, too, that are not costly; and there is no reason why even a kitchen wall should be without a beautiful face, a fair landscape, or a group of flowers glowing with the color of life.

Let the farmer provide a large pleasant kitchen and interest himself in its conveniences for work—being as enthusiastic in furnishing labor-saving machines for this department of farming as for his outside fields—and he will find that he makes an investment that pays an hundred fold.

Let the farmer's wife make the kitchen a bright and sweet-aired realm, and be proud to be its intelligent and efficient queen. Let her beautify her work as much as possible, and lift it above the dull, discouraging slough of drudgery. With conveniences for work, and a cheerful, comfortable place to work in, the women are few who will not make their homes “the dearest spot on earth” to all who dwell within them.

THE DINING-ROOM.

Although there are many country kitchens so shining and orderly and clean-aired that it is a pleasure to break bread in them, there are many others which, owing to a large family and a pressure of work, cannot always be nice and orderly at meal times; so it is well, if it can be afforded, to have a small cheerful room opening from the kitchen, easily warmed in winter, and from which heat

and flies can be excluded in summer, where meals can be eaten in the healthful serenity and comfort which is almost as essential as the food itself. What can be more refreshing to the laborer than to enter from the blistering glare of a harvest day into a cool, softly-lighted room in which the fragrance of freshly gathered flowers, or the aroma of leafy boughs, mingles its poetry with the cheerful prose of the beef and vegetables? And how pleasant and restful it is for his helpmate to lay aside her kitchen cares and kitchen-apron together, and come smiling and tidy to her little throne behind the tea-service.

Such a room requires very little furniture. The walls should be of neat and quiet tint, with two or three pleasing pictures and some brackets for pots of ferns, or such vines as will grow prettily in the shade during the hot summer weather. In winter a few petunias and two or three foliage plants will fill the sunny windows with brightness and bloom. There should be a long, substantial table, with plenty of elbow room for all, and a side-board or cupboard for table crockery. A small table will be found a convenience—if there is no side-board—for holding such dishes as are used toward the end of a meal at dinner time, when the varieties of food have a tendency to crowd each other. The window curtains may be plain shades of color suited to the walls of the room. Nothing can be better for the floor in summer time than an oiled surface, like that of the kitchen, which can be made comfortable to the feet in winter by a large “crumb-cloth” of drugget or home-made carpeting.

In more opulent farm-homes where the wife has liberty to devote more time and means to house decoration and furnishing, very handsome dining-rooms can be achieved with a moderate outlay. There should be high walls, a fire-place, and a fine large window looking to the south or east. All the rest is in the hands of the mistress. If

the floor has been laid in light and dark woods, well and good. It will be a thing of beauty through more than one life time, and always look genuine and substantial, as everything about a dining-room should. If, however, the floor is of pine, it may be stained in blocks or stripes in a bordering two feet in width, covered with two coats of best varnish, and the center adorned with three or more breadths of pretty carpeting.

Supposing green and oak to have been chosen for the colors of this room—the ceiling calcimined with pale sage-green, and the wood-work either treated with oak-graining or oiled and varnished without paint: Select for the walls a flat-figured paper in oak and green tints, and place around the top a wide border or frieze in black and green and oak, with perhaps a touch of rich maroon. The carpet should be of small figure in green and oak, with a border of maroon. The window lambrequins should be of green rep with green and oak gimp and fringe, or of black-ground chintz with a gold and green foliage pattern. A few neatly potted and luxuriant plants should be kept upon the sills, which can also be decorated with lambrequins if liked.

Have a carpenter construct a side-board of simple but substantial form, faced with oak or maple, or else made of the best of pine. Glue artificial wood-carvings of fruits in the center of the top, and upon each door and drawer, and finish the whole with oil and varnish.

The table may also be home-made and large and solid, with rounded corners and substantial turned legs, with casters. If not of real oak, the legs should be nicely grained to imitate it. If colored table linen is used it should be buff and white, with green borders, or buff and green in any neat, small patterns. These cloths, however, are generally covered with plain white ones at meal time.

Above this table there should be a handsome hanging

lamp or small chandelier, with perhaps a little basket of Kennelworth Ivy, or other gracefully growing vine, suspended from it. Such a light glorifies the plainest tea-table.

As for chairs there are a great many ways for achieving handsome ones without paying five dollars apiece for them at furniture shops. If a dozen oak chairs without seats can be obtained "in the rough" at the factory, they can be transformed into something pretty and substantial at small cost. They should first be oiled and varnished. Then with some stout sacking or canvas, some rich, dark cretonne, some gimp and furniture tacks, and either hair or wool for stuffing, upholster the seats—being careful to fasten the canvas securely in place and to cut the cretonne to fit neatly. Even the cheap "splint-bottoms" which cost much less than oak, can be made into handsome chairs by painting the wood-work black, ornamenting it with gilt and scarlet lines, and varnishing—the seats to be upholstered in cretonne, striped linen, or common chintz.

For pictures, let us do away with the poor slaughtered innocents that have so long been selected for dining-room walls! Why is a dead fish with its ghastly open mouth, or a shot partridge hanging by one leg to a nail, considered a pleasing object for contemplation while one is eating? "Game Pieces" ought to be banished to the walls of butchers' shops! In our dining-rooms let us rather have friendly portraits, children's faces, radiant flowers, and living birds and fishes.

THE PARLOR.

I place this room last because it is least in every genuine home—the home that is made to be used and enjoyed by the family. If means are small and best room furniture seems to be among the things never to be obtained,

let not the whole house be made dismal because of it; but rejoice that there is a kitchen, that there are comfortable bedrooms, and that there is a bit of Heaven in the form of a flower garden under the windows!

I know a good woman, the wife of a hard-working and not very wealthy farmer, who has spent years of her life toiling and scrimping and pinching herself and her family to the one end of having a handsome parlor and a handsome spare bedroom furnished after her own heart. She has them now—the bright Brussels carpet, the lace curtains, the upholstered chairs, the gilt-framed mirror, the glittering wall-paper, the richly bound Bible, the marble-topped table, the “pair” of mammoth heavily framed pictures, and in the bedroom the magnificent bed and all its appropriate surroundings. There is not even an embroidered sofa cushion, or fancy match safe, or gorgeous tidy, lacking. And over all this grandeur, for it is quite grand for that small farming hamlet, reigns profound shadow and silence. Sometimes on Sunday afternoon a gray-haired and rather unhappy-faced woman opens one of the shutters just enough to admit the ghost of a sunbeam and sits down by the window the solitary monarch of all the fine things about her. Her two boys have grown up and branched off into existence that has no “farming” in it. Her poor husband mightily prefers the kitchen or the back porch to the sacred splendors of the “front room,” which he never enters without a mortal fear of doing some damage. So the parlor is her very own. It is too nice for the church sociable, and too large to throw open to “just the neighbors,” and so it waits in shadow and silence like a very orderly sepulchre in which the good woman will one day lie in state, all unmindful of the neighbors’ feet upon her sacred carpet. And this seems to be all that her Best Room amounts to.

“Nevertheless, it is pleasant,” exclaims some reader, “to have one room in the house that is always in order

and ready for visitors." So it is! And after fitting up good bedrooms, comfortable and convenient kitchens, pleasant dining-rooms, and nice pantries and milk-rooms, parlors are the very next things to be considered in our farm-homes—unless some of the money devoted to them might better be used for books and magazines and newspapers, good fruits, shrubberies, and such essential things as may be lacking.

Even if one has but a small room to devote to this purpose it can be made very pleasing, and has the advantage of requiring less furniture. A fire-place with a mirror above it, and a large wide-ledged window opposite, make the room already half fitted up! The ceiling calcimined with the palest blue, and the walls with a tint two shades deeper, will have the effect to make the room appear more spacious. A border of dark and light-blue, or of bluish-green and gold, should be used on such walls. The wood-work should be stained walnut-color and varnished. The most suitable carpet would be an ingrain in small figures of blue and gray, with perhaps a bit of yellow or a bit of rose-color scattered through it. Plain blue or gray lambrequins should be used for the windows, trimmed with fringe of the same color. For the curtains beneath them, sheer Swiss muslin is always pretty and graceful. Sometimes they are made with a knife plaiting or a fluted ruffle down the inner edges and across the bottom; but they look well when finished with simple hems, and are much easier laundered.

The fireplace should be treated after the manner described in a previous chapter, and will be found the most effective feature in the room, especially if furnished with a good sized mirror, which will reflect back all the light and beauty of the apartment, and, like the cool color on the walls and ceiling, enhance its size. Indeed, I would advise all those tasteful but restricted home-keepers who are anxious to have really attractive parlors, to aim for

simply these three things—a large, wide-silled window, a fire-place, and a generous-sized mirror to place above it—letting curtains and carpet and chairs come about as they can ; or using for a while plain shades for the windows, and a neat matting for the floor. Adding two or three pictures, a few books, some growing vines, and an easy chair to such a room, it is already cosy and hospitable in its aspect.

In this room, as in all others, one should avoid a cluttered, crowded appearance. Do not afflict the walls with a general outbreak of small pictures, brackets, and fancy articles, as if a notion-store were being fitted up. It is better to distribute such things throughout the house, that each room may have its two or three touches of graceful fancy.

For a table obtain something in a round or oval shape. It may be of pine or whitewood, but must be strong and substantial. Paint the legs black and varnish them. The top can be covered with a blue or gray cloth, embroidered about the edges, if one has time, with silk, or with zephyr wool. Above the table suspend a pretty hanging lamp with shade.

Sometimes old chairs can be purchased at an auction, or dragged out of a garret, and transformed into beautiful things with paint and varnish, decalcomania-gildings, and stuffed seats of rep or cretonne. These, with a light willow rocker, or a camp-chair, and a handsome foot-stool or two, will comfortably complete the furnishing.

CHAPTER IV.

THE DAIRY-ROOM AND BUTTER-MAKING.

This department of the farm-house, as well as the kitchen and the flower-garden, should be the pride and joy of the country-woman's heart.

It is stated that the best butter is now made at the large Creameries or Butter-Factories. It is because these establishments have every facility and convenience for the work, and maintain thorough care and attention in the work. There is no magic in the making of the high-priced delicious butter, tasting of June's own roses and clover fields, that finds its way to favored tables. The milk of healthy, well-treated cows, is given its best chance, and is transformed by the best methods into butter. That is all. And the farm-homes must be few where these conditions and rules cannot be maintained, if there's only a resolute will to lead the way.

If butter is made on any considerable scale, a Dairy-house should be built, with thick walls and deep eaves, over a pure running brook or cool spring, or arranged so that living water a foot or more in depth can be carried through it in troughs resting upon the floor, with ample space for walking between them. In these troughs the milk can be placed, in cans or crocks, in such quantities that the level of the water will be a little higher than that of the milk. Experienced butter-makers have found this to be the most satisfactory arrangement possible for keeping the milk at a cool, even temperature, between the time of setting and skimming.

Everything about this milk-house should be kept immaculately sweet and clean. The building should be well ventilated, but not breezy, and the windows pro-

vided with wire screens and movable shutters, by which dust and flies can be guarded against, and the sunlight tempered. All animal and vegetable odors should be far removed, for, as every one knows, milk is very sensitive to the slightest taint or offensiveness in the atmosphere.

Nothing less sweet than clover fields or orchards should be near, and the current of the spring or brook should be swift enough to prevent any harm from standing water. At one end of the building should be plenty of space for a table, a churn, and all the utensils and appliances for milk and for butter-making. It would be best if this were separated from the main room by a partition.

In places where the advantage of water is lacking, the next best arrangement for milk is a clean, dry, well-ventilated cellar, with screened windows, whitewashed walls, a brick, stone, or cement floor, and easy steps leading down to it. A dumb-waiter might easily be introduced, and prove a great saving of time and muscle in carrying the milk and the pails, pans, et cetera, up and down. Of course a milk-cellar should be used for its legitimate purpose alone, fruits, vegetables, and all other cellar stores being kept in a strictly separate room.

Next to a suitable dairy-room, the first step in the direction of good butter-making is to give the cows good care. No one has any moral right, and ought not to have any legal right, to possess cows or any other living creatures, unless he can treat them well. We need no wider insight into the meanness of a man's real nature, than to see his cows and horses and dogs wince at his approach!

A good farmer is good to his cows; and well-treated cows yield far richer and more abundant milk than the poor, half-fed, worried animals, to whom milking-time is more or less of a terror.

Cows should have in summer abundant pasturage, pure water, and plenty of shade, with no nagging from dogs

or from thoughtless boys, who are in haste to have the "chores" over. In winter, it is melancholy to see cows shrinking and crouching in a bleak, unsheltered yard, with no escape from a biting wind or a sleety storm, until they are put into ill-cared for stables at night, with the snow still clinging to their cold wet hides. It would be bad enough for a man to wear a wet over-coat all day, but he would consider himself decidedly ill-treated, if he were made to sleep in it all night in a draughty shed. Cows enjoy getting into dry clothes as well as any one!—so let them have a vigorous brushing when they have been exposed to snow, and give them plenty of clean dry litter for their nightly comfort. They should have shelter at all times, summer and winter, whenever they are inclined to seek it. In winter their food should be all the well-cured hay they will eat clean, plenty of water, and a little treat of roots or grain every morning. Do not regard it as silly to give them caressing pats at milking-time, and let them have names of their own, and learn to answer to them.

The little good-natured, affectionate Jersey, if you can afford to pay the price asked for her, is one of the best cows for supplying the table with rich and delicious milk. Even children can milk these mites of cows, and they easily become great pets. It may be thought by those unfamiliar with their good qualities that their small size is against them, and that some big common cow will return more milk for a much smaller investment of money. But what the Jersey lacks in quantity compared with our common cows, in their "new milch" time, she makes up in quality in a steady yield of milk throughout the year—except for a short interval before calving, when she is with difficulty dried off. They arrive at maturity early, generally giving milk when two years old, and often when younger. They are as hardy as the common breeds, and more easily kept—as they have the inherited trait of

being accustomed to, and content with, small quarters, and will nibble patiently about wherever a little grass grows, instead of hooking down bars or bounding over fences in search of possible better feed; so that they are not only good cows on general principles, but are particularly good cows for village-families, or for small farm-homes where pasturage is limited.

For both quality and quantity of milk, for large size, for good beef, and for easy keeping, the Durham stands high in the scale of excellence, and has been widely introduced in this country. Allen's Cattle Book says they have been known to give from thirty-four to thirty-six quarts a day on grass pasture only—being equal to from twelve to fifteen pounds of butter per week. Mr. Allen thinks the Shorthorn crosses with the native stock prove to be more profitable to ordinary farmers than the pure breed, and certainly they are far less expensive.

But whatever the breed, rare or common, every common-sense farmer bears in mind that there is almost as much in the proper treatment of cows as in their lineage.

At milking-time, in the best dairies, the cows' bags are washed and wiped dry before the milk is drawn; and if the weather is rainy, they are placed in shelter and their flanks and bags rubbed dry, before milking, that no hint of what is called a "cowey" taste may be conveyed to the pails. Milking should be performed in a cheery and vigorous manner. No one is required to sing at the work unless he feels like it, but I've no doubt the "singing milkmaid," who figures in pastoral poetry, gets more milk in her pail than the glum and silent farm-hand who plumps himself down with a crossly drawn out "so-o-o!" and falls to milking as if he hated existence generally and the dairy business in particular.

It is hardly necessary to suggest that the pails, strainers, pans, and everything belonging to dairy-work should be perfectly clean and sweet.

The milk should be strained into pans as soon as possible, and kept in a cool, even temperature until the cream has risen. The cream from one milking churned by itself makes the very best butter, and as this necessitates frequent churning, so much the better—the butter is surer to be sweet and perfect in flavor. Twenty-four hours is usually considered sufficient for the rising of the cream; but in a cool dairy-room, if the number of cows is not too large, the milk can be allowed to stand enough longer to be divided into three churnings a week without detriment to the butter flavor.

The “grain” of butter, the butter-globule or cell, is something not considered by every dairy-woman. If it is destroyed, the butter is “salvey,” and of inferior value; if preserved, the butter is firm and solid. Too rapid churning is apt to crush the grain. The churning process should not be performed inside of forty or fifty minutes, and the common dash-churn has been accepted as about the best in use. A swing-churn, recently invented, which dashes the cream from one end to the other, and has no troublesome inside work, has been received with favor, and as it is worked with a crank, must be much easier to use than the one first mentioned.

As soon as the butter has “come,” it should be taken from the churn with a wooden ladle, and washed in pure cold water, using a wooden butter-worker, and never touching it with the hands. A capital dairy-woman in Wisconsin places her freshly churned butter on an inclined white-oak plank, about two and a half by three feet in size, and works and salts it with a long flat stick made square at the end. On this surface—the board can be a larger one if needed—the butter can be spread out and rinsed and salted in a little time. An ounce of salt and a quarter of an ounce of loaf-sugar, well mixed, is used for every pound of butter. After salting, the butter may be set away for a few hours, and then be worked

again, and either made into rolls, or prints, or packed in jars, in the latter case being put down very firmly, and covered with a nice white cloth dipped in brine. When the jar is filled, brine is poured over it, and a cloth, cut to exactly fit, is placed smoothly on top.

In winter-churning a natural June-like color can be given to the sweet, but rather pallid butter, by grating the outside of two or three well-cleaned orange carrots into a cup of new milk, which strain through a wet cloth into the cream previous to churning.

CHAPTER V.

CHEESE.

"The English method of preparing rennets," says Prof. Hodgeboom, "is to steep them in brine strong enough to float an egg, putting six rennets, a sliced lemon, and an ounce of saltpetre to two gallons of brine. This is made six weeks before it is to be used, and it is considered that age improves its qualities."

Hydrochloric acid is used in Holland, where such famous cheese is made, in place of rennet; and the process of obtaining the curd is not only simplified, but more of it is obtained from the same quantity of milk.

A good cheese is made by removing the cream from a night's milking after it has stood ten or twelve hours, and adding the skimmed milk to the fresh morning's milk after warming it to new-milk heat.

"Stilton" and "Cream Cheddar"—very rich cheeses—are made by adding the night's cream to the morning milk, in the proportion of one quart of cream to ten

quarts of milk. A cloth strainer is placed in a tub, so that the bottom and sides are covered, the warm milk poured in, rennet added (any good recipe book will give explicit directions as to the proportions used), and after the curd is formed it is cut in squares, carefully lifted out in the strainer, and placed in a cheese-basket to drain. After draining it is placed in a small hoop not more than six or seven inches in diameter and eight and nine inches high, with a "follower" pierced with holes at each end. It is then placed on a shelf and turned four or five times a day with no pressure. It is not salted in the curd, like other cheese, but when it becomes firm enough to handle it is bandaged and salt rubbed on externally until it is sufficiently seasoned.

The "whole milk" cheese is the kind most commonly made in this country in large dairies. On farms where there are but few cows, the skimmed night's milk added to the morning milking is more frequently used. These cheeses are made in the same way as "Stilton," except that the curd is salted and weights are used in pressing them.

Little "Sage" cheeses are very nice. A milking from four or five cows will make one. Steep a large handful of fresh sage leaves in a pint of new milk. Divide the milk for the cheese in two tubs equally, and into one of them strain the milk from the sage, which will make it of a delicate green color. Add rennet to both tubs, and when the curds are ready for salting, mix the two together, and put to press in a small hoop with a weight. These cheeses have a peculiarly rich and pleasant flavor.

CHAPTER VI

THE FLOWER GARDEN.

A bit of Flower Garden carefully and intelligently cultivated, "yields" more to its loving possessor, than any other feature of a country home ; for, aside from its beautiful and fragrant blossoms, it yields the tonic of sunlight and pure air, the soothing balm of sweet and faithful companionship, and the inspiration of continually unfolding beauty.

"To have a flower garden," says an English writer, "is to have many friends continually near." And it is indeed wonderful and beautiful, the subtle sympathy and friendliness that seems to lean out of flowers toward those who love them and faithfully care for them.

As there is nothing more melancholy before a farmhouse door than an ill-kept yard, in which a few plants are pitifully struggling for life among besetting and triumphant weeds, so there is nothing more cheerful and fascinating than smooth turf, a tidy walk, cleanly-growing shrubs, and luxuriant, happy-faced flowers.

"But I have no time for such work," some weary home-keeper may say. Then take time ! No other investment of twenty or thirty minutes out of the daylight hours will pay as well, unless it be twenty or thirty minutes devoted to a restful nap ! Your housework is confining. Much of it is hard and monotonous, and brings wrinkles to your forehead, and maybe an ache to your spine ; and there's not much joyousness or sweetness about an unrelieved routine of baking and dish-washing, and baby-tending from Sunday morning until Saturday night. Then all the sooner should you come out in the open air and form the acquaintance of happy and healthful things that would be glad to know you.

It is not necessary to begin on a grand scale. A little money for seeds and shrubs, and a little half-hour out of the day will go an astonishing ways, and amply repay the expenditure. A large garden, with a great variety of flowers and shrubs, would require the constant attention of at least one pair of hands to keep it in suitable condition, and this, in most farm-homes, cannot be afforded. It is the little plat well-tilled that the average farm-wife has time for; and greater satisfaction and more splendid results come from a few well-chosen plants thoroughly cultivated, than from a great mass of things only half looked after.

In the country, where congenial soils, manures, ample grounds, and the right sort of exposure are always easily secured, it is a wonder that every farm-house is not refined and adorned in this way. And yet, around thousands of country homes, flower-cultivation is either ignored altogether, or confined to a lilac bush more or less straggling, and maybe a tuft of striped grass or "live-forever," to keep it company. This state of things is owing, not so much to an indifference to beautiful things, as to the feeling that there is no time for them. I am afraid, too, that in some instances the "good man" is answerable for the lack of pretty flowers and neat walks about his house, having a mistaken idea that a flower garden is nonsense, and that nothing is profitable unless it can be weighed or measured and toted off to market. This is the sort of man that makes farm-life abominable, for his scorn of a few lily-bulbs and roses does not end with them, but is apt to be poured out on other forms of everyday beauty and comfort. His wife's face gets the solemn unhopeful look seen too often on women's faces, his sons turn away from farming in disgust, and his daughters will be apt to think twice before they marry farmers.

However, something can be done with even such a depressing curmudgeon at the head of the family. No

doubt there may be something of a conflict at the first outbreak in the direction of adornment, and if he is particularly savage, several seasons of struggle may be maintained before he can be brought to see that flowers and shrubberies are "profitable," that the love and care of them lightens his wife's burdens and brightens her health, that their aromatic presence helps to keep the air pure and wholesome, and that the mere sight of the roses and lilies nodding to each other across the broad, neat walk, adds ten per cent to the value of his home.

Then do not be discouraged, my home-keeper, if along with your many cares and duties, an offish husband stands in the way of a little flower-culture. Go quietly and very good naturedly to work, and the beautiful things will steal upon him unawares. Or, if you are obliged to call upon him for assistance, be firm and fearless—and still good natured—and in his secret heart he will admire your growing ambition, though he growls and grumbles with every plunge of his spade, and pokes over your papers of long-named seeds with many a sarcasm.

Do not make the common mistake of new beginners, which is to sow a great variety of seeds without regard to their tender or hardy qualities, and covering them all alike whether as large as a Castor Bean, or as tiny as a Petunia. Many do this, and expect to have a floral Paradise, when very likely only a few of the seeds will show themselves. A good guide like Mr. Henderson's, of New York, or Mr. Vick's, of Rochester, and many others, will tell what every flower is, and how and when its seeds should be planted. From them and from my own experience, I will condense a few facts that will be helpful to the amateur, and save her from a few expensive mistakes.

A dozen varieties of good annuals, with a few bulbs and shrubs, are quite enough for a handsome beginning.

A suitable soil is the first thing to be secured. A

too clayey, or a too sandy soil, will need to be made over before it will grow flowers successfully. Equal quantities of sand, loam, manure, and well-rotted turf or leaves, makes a soil in which nearly all plants will thrive. Therefore, if the soil is heavy, clayey loam, lighten it with sand and leaf-mould. If too sandy and light, mix with it a little leaf or turf-mould, and peat or muck from rich meadows. Sand is quite an indispensable element—making the soil warmer and mellow, and easier drained. If a soil lacks sand one must take pains to obtain enough of it to make the ground for seed-sowing soft and friable.

The best location for flower-borders or parterres is to the southeast—the sun from dawn to noon being better than afternoon light, which, through the summer, is scorching, and withering rather than invigorating to most plant-life. Southwestern light ranks next, while the north side of the house is the very last place to be devoted to this purpose, although there are some varieties of plants, like Pansies, Lily of the Valley, Ferns, and Myrtle, that will flourish finely in such a location.

The beds or “borders” can be made in endless variety of shapes, but those simply made, and consequently easier kept in order, are a greater satisfaction to the eye, and certainly more comfortable to the laborer. These fanciful crescents, hearts, stars, etc., require a great deal of care in bordering the edges with something that will keep them well defined, and in maintaining smooth, clean walks among them. So if one has little time, and still less assistance, it is best to make straight beds, not more than two feet wide, on either side of the walk leading to the gate. These, with “mounds” for Verbenas, Petunias, and such plants as like to trail about in considerable space, will be sufficient field for almost any one.

Have the beds spaded to the depth of two feet, and the soil properly prepared. The beds, when completed, should not be more than three or four inches above the

path. The path, or walk, must be wide enough for two people to walk side by side without brushing against the flowers. It should be paved with brick, or large, flat stones, or hardened with gravel, or neatly planked, plank being least desirable, because it so soon decays and becomes unwholesome from the dampness and mould beneath it. Bricks set edgewise make a good border for the beds, or large, smooth pebbles, or narrow planking can be used. Narrow strips of turf, if kept in "living green," and neatly clipped, make a pretty edge, but it will require care.

In February or March, according to latitude, seeds should be ordered, and such as require it should be started in boxes in the house, so that by the time spring is fairly begun, and the ground is warm, the young plants will be all ready for their out-door quarters. Nearly all annuals, in the Northern States, should be started in the house. This process makes them several weeks earlier, when, if they are sown late in the open ground, the September frosts often come to cut them down just as they have unfolded into beautiful bloom.

HARDY BULBS AND PLANTS.

From a list of Hardy Bulbs select a few desirable ones, and plant them in the borders six or seven feet apart, which will leave space for the annuals. These plants, aside from a yearly enriching of the soil, plenty of water during their flowering season, and an occasional dividing of roots, need scarcely any attention, which fact, combined with the great beauty and fragrance of the kinds here mentioned, makes them actually necessary to every flower-lover's happiness. Of good Lilies, especially, one cannot have too many. A few years ago—when fresh from Japan, they were sold only at very high prices, but now they are offered at such low figures that every garden should have one, at least, from this glorious family.

Lilium auratum, or Golden-banded Lily of Japan, has a large, white, graceful blossom, with a golden band through the center of each petal. It sometimes puts forth twenty blossoms from a single stalk, and is deliciously fragrant. Flowers in July and August.

Lilium longiflorum has trumpet-shaped flowers of clear alabaster white, from five to eight inches in length, opening early in July.

Lilium speciosum unfolds in August a magnificent blossom of rich, rose color, spotted with crimson and purple, and little shining points like crystalized dew.

These lilies rapidly put forth little bulbs below the surface, and should be divided every year or two and planted separately, about three inches deep.

Lilium candidum, named by the florists as the "Common Garden Lily," and bearing a lower price than the above sorts, is not so common, but it would prove a lovely novelty in many a garden, especially in the West. It has large, white flowers, and is very fragrant, blossoming in June and July.

Plant these lily-bulbs late in the fall, in rich, mellow soil, about six inches below the surface. Do not let any manure touch the bulbs, as it might rot them, but spread it upon the top. As severe weather comes on add a slight covering of leaves. These lilies can also be grown in pots as window-plants. I have started *candidum* lilies in December, and had glorious flowers for Easter.

A few bulbs of *Polyanthus Narcissus*, cream-white and yellow, a fragrant, early spring flower, will be liked. Plant them under four inches of soil, about the first of November.

Every garden should have a bed of the Lily of the Valley—they are such delicious little flowers! The open border is not suitable for them, as they prefer a shaded, moist corner, and in such a place, and with no other care than Nature's, they will send up their rich leaves and

waxen bells before the summer flowers have even dreamed of blossoming. The bulbs are very small, and are sold, cheaply, by the dozen or the hundred.

Among *Pæonies*, in place of the solitary double red sort that used to be the pride of every well-regulated country garden, are now found a hundred varieties. Doubtless three or four of the best sorts would satisfy the demands of a small garden. They are brilliant, showy flowers, and are often as fragrant as roses.

Festiva has a carmine center shading out into white.

Virginialis, clear white.

Amabilis, rose, with white center.

Pattsii, rich, deep crimson.

Blush, large, rosy pink.

Pæonies require three years to become of good size, but after that they increase rapidly, and require so much space that it is well to cut away some of their tubers, or "toes," every spring, and present them to some one who is not so fortunate as to possess them.

Hollyhocks are among the dear old standard flowers that should never be lost sight of. There are rich double sorts in all colors, and in view of their tall, sentinel air, they might be planted at either side of the gate, or in clumps in the grass plat. For three months and more they are in constant flower. If grown from seed they will not flower until the second year.

Larkspur is a desirable flower, because of its lovely shades of blue and its brave habit of blossoming early and late.

Two or three sorts of *Perennial Phlox* should be chosen; and they will look best if planted in a cluster on the sward or against the leafy verdure of a hedge. White Lady and Chloris, the latter a vivid red, might be planted together.

Lychnis is a brilliant and showy perennial, growing

two feet in high, and is in two varieties, scarlet and deep orange.

Dianthus, or Pinks, should be generously chosen from. Every one loves "pinks," from grandmother to the baby. There are many hardy sorts that are almost as delicious as the rich, but tender, Carnation. Alba, a double white, and Laciniatus, a fine fringed variety in various colors, are both bright and fragrant additions to the flower-border.

Perennial Flax, a lovely blue flower, and *Dicentra*, the graceful Bleeding Heart, should not be forgotten.

From the foregoing list of bulbs and plants enough can be selected, with a few annuals, to plentifully supply a small garden. And remember it is the small garden, well cared for, that we have in view.

And now the seeds of a few choice, rich Annuals are wanted for the ample space between the Perennials. Most beginners in flower-garden sow ten times the quantity of seed that is needed. By studying the catalogues of any good florist, choosing a few best sorts, and sowing the seeds carefully and properly, according to their needs, a great deal of disappointment can be avoided. Three or four neighbors should club together when sending for seeds, and thus lessen the expense for all. Nearly every package contains seed enough to supply three gardens with whatever variety it contains, if only judiciously planted.

A quantity of suitable soil should be placed in the cellar in the fall, that it may be in readiness for starting the seeds in boxes as early as the first of March.

Transplanting, with the exception of Pansies and very hardy annuals, should not be attempted until all danger of spring frost is over and the ground is warm and mellow. Cool, cloudy weather should be chosen for the work, and the young plants must be watered morning and evening, unless the rain comes to one's assistance.

ANNUALS.

Asters.—A package of mixed seeds, or what is better, if dimes are not to be counted, half a dozen separate sorts of this beautiful summer and autumn flower, should be among the first selected. They are as brave as they are beautiful, and will cheer the eye with their bright blossoms long after "the melancholy days have come," if sheltered from the frosty nights under a light blanket or shawl. The smaller plants can also be taken up in pots and boxes, and will continue to bloom in dining-room and parlor windows for several weeks. The dwarf sorts are especially pretty for potting.

Antirrhinum, or Snap-Dragon, is a rich and interesting flower in nearly all colors. The seeds are so minute that one package will supply half a dozen gardens, and they should be covered very slightly with soil.

Balsams are exquisite for flat bouquets, often equaling roses in beauty. These might be started in collar-boxes, which, at transplanting time, can be set directly into the ground (after removing the bottoms) without disturbing the roots. They should be given plenty of room.

Coreopsis and the *Double Buttercup* should be given a corner, for as some one has remarked, no bouquet is quite complete without a "drop of sunlight" in the form of a yellow flower.

Candytuft comes in purple, white, and crimson, and this with *Sweet Alyssum* and *Sweet Peas* can be sown in the garden as soon as the frost is out of the ground. The two first are pretty for edging. The Peas should be planted under four inches of soil, and if planted in circles, one within the other, can be easily supported by strings tied to a central pole. Painted Lady, Scarlet Invincible, and Crown Princess are among the prettiest sorts of Sweet Peas.

Cypress Vine, or *Ipomœa quamoclit*, as the florists call it,

is pretty for small trellises, in two varieties, scarlet and white. Every one should order a package of the large flowering *Ipomœa* in mixed colors. It resembles the Morning Glory, but is larger, and of rich and splendid colors. Seeds should be started in the house. They are great climbers, and think nothing of going up to chamber windows and clambering about the eaves. Do not forget "*Ipomœa*—finest mixed," in making out the list of seeds.

Lavender is a sweet and gentle flower that should always be given a generous bed in our gardens. A few sprigs of it in a vase will fill a room with grateful aroma, and when cut and dried, and placed in thin muslin bags, it will pleasantly perfume drawers and boxes of bed-linen, clothing, etc.

Mignonette is a plain little flower, but very popular because of its wild "woody" fragrance and continual bloom. It is almost indispensable for bouquets, and, like the Aster, will bloom far into the fall, with a little protection. To secure early growth the seeds can be started in boxes and very carefully transplanted, as the roots dislike disturbance.

Nasturtiums.—These gay, free-flowering, old-fashioned flowers come out in all shades, from cream-color to deep velvety maroon. They are excellent for vases, hanging-baskets, rockeries, and make a very bright and luxuriant window-plant, if given good soil and plenty of sunlight. The dwarf sorts are best for windows and baskets, and the large climbing varieties for vases and rockeries.

Pansies.—A group of large, rich-hued Pansies is a joy! They require some care in sowing, and a good deal of rich-feeding, but they make full returns. Sow, in March, a packet of fine mixed sorts in rich, pulverized soil, sifting but a slight covering over them, placing panes of glass over the pots or boxes, and sprinkling the earth carefully every day with warm water. A lady, whose Pansies are particularly glorious, says she has the best

success in obtaining seedlings by sowing the seeds in boxes, merely pressing them into the dirt with the palm of her hand, sprinkling slightly, and covering them lightly with a white cloth dipped in warm water. She thinks the seeds are often baked to death under glass, but under this moist white cloth they are all sure to germinate. After the first tiny leaves have appeared, she removes the cloth and gives them direct sunlight through the morning hours, but takes care that it is tempered by fresh air, so as not to be too hot for them. When a few leaves have appeared, or after three or four weeks, they can be transplanted to the beds where they are to grow, if the ground is not too wet and cold. They will grow best when not exposed to afternoon sunlight. Soap-suds or liquid manures applied to the roots every two weeks will increase their luxuriance, and their various and beautiful colors will be a continual pleasure from June to November.

Petunias.—White, white striped with carmine, and the delicate little white-throated crimson sort, are good kinds to select. They will have the best effect if transplanted to beds or mounds by themselves. Their constant bloom and delicate fragrance should never be missed from a country home. The small crimson, and the striped and blotched varieties, can be grown in windows, and will gladden many a dark winter day, if given a place between pots of Mignonette and Sweet Alyssum. Seeds should be treated the same as Pansies.

1. *Salvia*, or Flowering Sage, in the scarlet, white, and blue varieties, is a very rich and beautiful flower, either for the house or garden. They are rather tender, and must not be transplanted until all danger of frost is over. Small plants can be placed in pots in the fall, cut down a little, and kept for winter flowering. The roots of *Salvia Patens*, a deep rich blue sort, can be kept through the winter like other tubers.

Verbenas.—From hundreds of varieties of this splendid, free-flowering annual, half a dozen well chosen sorts will result in a fine display. For a small garden I would choose Snow Storm, Gazelle, Black Bedder, Iona, Cupid, and Conspicua,—or else a package of the best mixed sorts. The seeds must be soaked in warm water twenty-four hours before planting. A shelf behind a kitchen stove, or a place on the back of the stove—if not too hot, is a good situation for the box or pots in which they are planted, as they need bottom-heat in order to germinate well. Sow in circles, or in regular rows, so as to distinguish them from the possible weeds which may spring up. When the *Verbenas* appear, keep them in a sunny window, being careful that the soil does not become too dry, and when they show the fourth leaf, transplant into little pots or boxes, where they can flourish until the spring is sufficiently established to place them in their garden beds. Slip plant and soil from the box without disturbing the roots, if possible, water plentifully, and shield from the hot sun for two or three days. Cuttings, or “slips” can be taken from the best sorts in August or September, and potted for winter culture.

SUMMER BULBS.

Tuberose.—This waxen-petaled, richly-perfumed flower should be remembered when ordering summer-flowering bulbs. It is rarely seen in country gardens—a great sin of omission, as all will say who have enjoyed its lovely blossoms, of which it puts forth twenty-five or thirty, and sometimes more, to the single stalk. Bulbs must be started in pots as early as February or March, and the grower must not be discouraged if they take their own leisurely time for sending up their shoots. In August and September one will be well repaid for patient waiting. The original bulb blooms only once, but creates a family

of little bulbs, which must be taken up after the tops have died down in the fall, and kept through the winter in a dry place where they will not freeze, and planted out separately in the spring. These will not flower the first year, but will grow into fine mature bulbs, which must be taken up in the fall, and potted very early in the spring, like the one first purchased.

Jacobeon Lily, or *Amaryllis*, is also rarely seen in farm gardens. It is a magnificent and graceful flower, of rich violet-crimson color. It can be started in pots, like the *Tuberose*, and the bulbs treated like *Dahlias*, *Gladiolus*, and the like.

Tritoma Uvaria, commonly called "Red-hot Poker," because of its spikes of flame-colored blossoms, would also be a brilliant novelty to many. It grows to the height of four feet or more, and makes a splendid appearance. Start in boxes early in March, and, in severe climates, keep the roots in sand through the winter.

Dahlias.—These queenly flowers are familiar to all. There seems no end to their variety of color. The pom-pone or dwarf sorts are exceedingly pretty for bouquets. The roots must be taken up before the ground freezes, well dried, but not broken apart, and packed away for the winter in thoroughly dry sand. If it is damp, they will rot. In the spring, growers generally start whole clusters together, and divide them after the sprouts appear—leaving two or three to each tuber. While growing they must be tied to stakes from time to time, as they are inclined to break down before a brisk wind. Enrich the soil about them, and be careful to give water when needed. By covering them when frost threatens, they will bloom late into the fall.

Gladiolus.—Solomon, in all his glory, could hardly have boasted the brilliant hues that appear in these flowers. The bulbs can be planted in the garden, about the last of April, and will have a splendid appearance if planted to-

gether in groups. Do not manure the soil—the usual mixture of loam, sand, and leaf-mould, suits them best. “Unnamed” sorts are sold by florists at a low figure, and they often prove to be quite as fine as the named and more expensive varieties. When the tops die down in the fall, dig and dry the bulbs, wrap them in paper, and keep them in a cool, dry cellar.

If from the foregoing list of seeds and bulbs, one can afford to choose but a limited variety, be sure to secure, at least, these treasures : Candidum and Auratum Lilies, Tuberoses, Dwarf Dahlias, one package of Aster seeds, one package of best mixed Pansies, one package of best mixed Petunias, one package of best mixed Verbenas, one package of Lavender, one package of Sweet Alyssum, one package of Sweet Peas, one package of Mignonette.

HARDY SHRUBS.

Aside from their intrinsic worth, shrubs are very desirable, because of the little care and trouble they impose. They are like generous friends, that give everything, and ask very little in return ; and still, like these same friends, they appreciate a bit of devotion now and then.

The sweet, time-honored Syringas and Lilacs, I place first in the list. Once planted in good soil, all they require is a little enriching and pruning once a year. They, and other tall shrubs, should be planted in well-chosen spots, where they will not obstruct pleasant views ; and if trimmed in tree-shapes, and the soil about them kept mellow, some bright annuals like Zinnias, Nasturtiums, or Petunias, will look prettily growing around them. Persian Lilacs, and Snowballs present a pleasing contrast, when allowed to grow in a group together.

No garden should lack its Roses. There are many hardy sorts, and every one can afford two or three of them. In return for their royal blossoms, let them have

the rich soil, and the annual cutting away of old wood that they need. Bewildering lists of names appear in the catalogues, but if I were beginning a garden on a limited scale, I would write to some standard florist, and ask him to send me three good hardy Roses—a pure white, a rich crimson, and a creamy blush—with, maybe, the “Gem of the Prairies,” for a climber, sending, of course, the catalogue price for hardy roses, and I should be very certain to be suited.

Roses should have good loam, with a sprinkling of sand, and a generous admixture of rotted manure. Next to the rich soil, the pruning knife is necessary. Do not hesitate to use it, for the Roses like it, and quickly send out their new shoots and best blooms to tell you so. Shoots two years old should be cut away, and the one year growths pruned down a little, every fall. If any slugs, lice, or other enemies appear in the spring or early summer, make a strong suds of soft soap and rain water, and give the bushes a thorough bath, after which rinse with clear water. Be careful to see that the branches and the underside of the leaves get the benefit of the suds. In blossom-time, gather the Roses with a lavish hand. Glorify the house with them, and send them to friends and neighbors, especially if there are any sick ones among them, for their fresh summery breath is particularly grateful to weary senses.

Oak-Leaved Hydrangea is a showy and interesting shrub, and is covered in midsummer with very large clusters of white flowers.

A *Scarlet-flowered Japan Quince*, and one or two varieties of *Spiræa*, with their feathery sprays of pink and white blossoms, should be afforded if possible.

The *Canna*, or “Indian Shot,” and *Ricinus*, or Castor Bean, both raised from seed, make a rich and striking appearance as summer shrubs. The seeds of the *Canna* must be soaked in hot water for a while before planting.

These plants can also be grown in large boxes, or vases, on the piazza, or elsewhere. They need rich soil and plenty of water.

CLIMBING VINES.

Beautiful are the ways of the Vine, whether it be the bold and vigorous Virginia Creeper, that finds foothold on the most forbidding wall, and grows the stronger and greater for the winds and storms that beat upon it, or the light and delicate Smilax, weaving its emerald-green tracery across the window panes, or around the portraits of beloved friends.

The forests are full of beautiful vines. *Convolvulus*, Bitter Sweet, Scarlet, and Yellow Honeysuckle, Virgin's Bower, Grape, and other graceful wild climbers, are within the reach of almost every country home, and should be sought after and wooed to grow around porches, and over gateways, and up on the roofs of unlovely sheds.

The Hop is a wholesome, thrifty vine, and if none other could be had, I would gladly and gratefully train it over verandas, and across kitchen and pantry windows, and rejoice in its cool shade and clean fragrance. But whoever has the good luck to live near a bit of wild woodland, can be generally sure of finding many things that will add grace and beauty to the plainest little home.

Then there are the annual climbers—whole worlds of verdure and-bloom, springing from a few little seeds that are obtained almost for the asking! Morning Glories, Scarlet Runners, *Ipomœas*, Fancy Gourds, *Cobea Scandens*, Wild Cucumbers—all rapid and vigorous growers, that, by the time of dog-days weave grateful screens for porches and windows that face the glaring afternoon skies.

Among climbers sold by florists are, Japan Honey-suckle, hardy, fragrant, and possessed of beautiful glossy

leaves, the different varieties of Clematis, the Chinese Wistaria of rapid growth and lovely blue flowers, the Trumpet Creeper, and young plants of Cobea Scandens. The latter vine, if housed in the fall, makes a pretty climber for the windows, but it is too tender to survive even a slight frost, when left out of doors.

CHAPTER VII.

WINDOW-PLANTS.

South and east windows are the only ones in which plants will do their best ; and I would not advise farm-wives in extreme Northern States to keep many varieties unless they have a place suitably sunny and warm. A few good Geraniums and Pelargoniums, with Fuchsias, Heliotropes, and Feverfews, can be grown with very little trouble. Insects seldom trouble them, and they are profuse bloomers ; and if the "window garden" is confined to a dozen pots, it is not much trouble to remove them to a cellar or a frost-proof cupboard on severe nights, and bring them out into the sunlight again in the morning. Their cheerful verdure and brilliant blossoms richly reward such painstaking.

GERANIUMS.

The *Dwarf Geraniums* are pretty for ordinary windows, and the scarlet and the white Tom Thumbs are lovely when grown in a pot together. Christabel is a rosy pink, and Little Dear is rose color and white. There is also a dwarf salmon that is worth having. These are all single.

Little Jewel is a double Dwarf Geranium, with blossoms of rich cardinal red. The Ghost is a fine double white, also dwarf.

A Madam Pollock will generally flourish in an ordinary room, if kept in brilliant light and close to the window pane. Its foliage is richly variegated.

It is hard to deny one's self a Sweet-scented Geranium, and Shrubland Pet is a good choice.

The *Pelargoniums*, or Show Geraniums, should be represented if one has plenty of sunlight for them. There are so many splendid varieties it is difficult to make a choice, but the Emperor would be mine, if I could have but one.

"Daisy Eyebright," the brain-bright woman to whom I have been indebted for many a valuable hint in my care of plants, says that "It is no more trouble to grow a Geranium than a Cabbage!" I hope every reader of these suggestions, who has never tried house-plant culture, will obtain a few varieties and see how they will glorify her room on some howling winter day when all outside looks dreary and hopeless.

Cuttings of Geraniums, *Pelargoniums*, Fuchsias, and *Heliotropes* can be ordered in July from florists anywhere within two or three hundred miles, for little more than the cost of packing and postage; and by early winter, if they have had good treatment, they will be ready to blossom. If young, well-rooted plants can be purchased, in place of the cuttings, so much the better, of course. Bear in mind that quite a number of pretty window-plants, like the *Petunia*, *Mignonette*, *Verbena*, and *Sweet Alyssum*, can be raised from seeds.

If cuttings are ordered, attend to them as soon as they arrive, as they will be more or less wilted. I have received them, however, after a journey of more than two hundred miles, in as fresh condition as if they had merely been brought from a neighboring greenhouse,

owing to the care with which they were packed. Make a place in readiness for them by taking a shallow box, or large flat pan, filling it half full of mixed loam and leaf-mould, or any good garden soil, sprinkling a layer of sand on top and making it well wet. Plant the cuttings two or three inches apart and place the box, or pan, in a north window, keeping the sand moist, but not sopping wet. When there are signs of new leaves starting, they can be transplanted into pots of suitable earth, using great care not to injure the just-formed roots, and keeping them out of the direct sunlight for two days.

Through warm weather pot-plants should be watered morning and night, and always with water as warm as the air; it has been proved beneficial when used even warmer. As cool weather advances they need less water. It is one of the serious mistakes of the inexperienced to drown plants to death in winter-time. Many ladies who are quite successful as window-gardeners, pour hot water into the saucers, and sometimes directly into the pots, where the depth of top-soil is sufficient to temper it before it reaches the roots. Yet such a practice requires care and a knowledge of what plants will and won't bear. Water at blood-heat, however, is always safe, but should be given only when the soil is dry and requires it, aquatic plants being the exception to this rule. By stirring up the soil with a wooden fork, or any other handy little implement, one can easily see whether the plant is in need of water.

FUCHSIAS.

The best winter-blooming sorts are *Speciosa* and *Serratifolia*. They should be started early in the spring, if cuttings are used, and potted into particularly rich soil. *Crown-of-Jewels* is pretty all the year round, because of its brightly-tinted foliage. Sometimes *Fuchsias*

are attacked, like the rose, by a miserable little beast of a red spider no larger than the dust of Cayenne pepper. He flourishes on the under side of the leaf, and if not exterminated will soon cause the foliage to curl up and drop off, greatly to the wonder of those who do not understand the trouble. It is not often that the spider comes to this plant, but, as an ounce of prevention is easier than a pound of cure, it is a good plan to wash Fuchsias every Monday in warm, but not too warm, laundry suds, and rinse thoroughly in pure water.

HELIOTROPES.

These grow readily from cuttings, but a plant must be a year or two old before much can be expected of it; so it is better to purchase those already rooted or partly grown. Its blossoms have a sweet, balsamic, honeyed fragrance, like the breath wafted from the pines on a sultry summer day. It is a great lover of sunlight. Its leaves are always clean and free from insects of all sorts, and with decent care it grows very fast. It can be pruned and trimmed into tree-shape, or it will conform gracefully to a trellis. The blossoms range in all the shades from deep violet to pale lavender. Good-sized plants can be purchased at from fifteen to twenty-five cents, and at still cheaper rates where several persons club together and so send larger orders.

FOLIAGE PLANTS.

These are cultivated for their rich and beautifully marked leaves, their blossoms being generally insignificant. Among the *Coleus*, the Golden Beauty, crimson and yellow, and Her Majesty, bronze and green, are perhaps the finest. Give them a rich, warm soil to grow in, with plenty of root room, plenty of sunlight, and all the water they need. They grow easily and rap-

idly from cuttings. They are quite tender, and must be protected from chills. By pinching off the top shoots of young plants a denser growth can be obtained.

Some varieties of *Begonia* are very rich and elegant in their leafage. Rex and Mrs. Alger are fine sorts.

The Elegante, a variegated ivy-leaved Geranium, is highly ornamental, whether trailing about a window or drooping from a hanging basket. A cutting of it taken in August will be of good size by December.

MONTHLY ROSES.

There are many varieties to choose from, but one or two will be enough in a small collection. They require more attention than almost any other house-plant, and must have very rich soil and plenty of sunlight. Frequent baths are necessary, for they invite various pests, the little red spider, being particularly fond of them. Roses will repay good care, however. I have found the pink Hermosa and the crimson Agrippina good sorts for window-culture. It is best to buy good-sized roses, grown on their own roots. They are rather expensive, but are reliable, and in a year or two will be grown into fine trees. Roses will grow from cuttings, but the process is a slow one to those impatient for buds and blossoms. The Safrano, rich, flesh tint; Isabella Sprunt, yellow, and White Daily, are also beautiful, free-flowering sorts. Good-sized Roses, full of buds and blossoms, can be purchased at from forty to fifty cents each, and smaller ones for much less.

THE CALLA.

This queenly Daughter of the Nile is a noble and showy plant for the window, requiring a congenial clayey soil and an abundance of water, being aquatic in its habits. From May to September it is usually set

away in the shade, or the pot is turned over on its side under some sheltering shrub or tree, to have a "rest," and is not watered at all. This is the treatment it gets at the hands of the Nile through the dry season. In September it is repotted, if necessary, as it requires plenty of root room, freely watered, and placed where it is to grow. Soon the broad, rich leaves begin to unfold, and before many weeks the flower stems push upward, bearing the pure white chalice that is a delight to all. A Calla must be two or three years old before amounting to much in size. In winter hot water should be poured into the saucers.

SUGGESTIONS.

Let the beginner in plant-culture keep these facts in mind: Window-plants, to be successfully grown in winter, require, first, as much light by day as can possibly be obtained, and utter darkness and a cooler temperature at night. No plant sleeps well in the glare of a lamp or within reach of a raging stove or furnace-heat.

The air about them must be fresh and pure. Sleeping rooms and apartments in daily use are unfit for plant growth, as well as human growth, unless well ventilated.

The plants must have soil suited to their needs; leaf-mould, loam, sand, and rotted manure—equal parts of each—for Roses, Heliotropes, Fuchsias, Geraniums, Carnations, Ivy, Violets, and all Foliage plants. A lighter, sandier soil better suits the Abutilon, Azalea, Bouvardia, Calceolaria, and Salvia. The Primrose and the Oxalis like a large admixture of leaf-mould, while the Calla is at home only in clayey loam.

Lumps of charcoal placed in the bottom of the pots to the depth of an inch or more, according to the size of the pots, assist drainage and tend to keep the soil sweet.

Judicious watering is of great importance. Some

plants are constant "tipplers," but nearly all plants suited to window-culture in ordinary living-rooms require water only when the soil is dry. A Cactus and a Calla are apt to be deluged alike by the inexperienced, and yet their needs are widely unlike.

Never crowd plants. Three or four vigorous, shapely plants growing in a bright, neatly-draped window, are a much more refreshing and respectable sight than twenty pots huddled together, with a choked and spindling mass of things struggling up to get a glimpse of sunlight.

New pots are better if soaked in water before being used, and old ones should be scrubbed clean.

Callas, Fuchsias, Heliotropes, Roses, and Foliage plants, need plenty of root room. Geraniums will blossom more profusely if pot-pinchd a little.

The common unglazed pots are better for plant growth than the china or the fancifully decorated ones; but when a blossoming or foliage plant is wanted for the table, or for a parlor bracket, the pot in which it is growing can be placed inside the ornamental one.

When a plant has filled a pot with its roots, it must be repotted into one of larger size. Place a little fresh charcoal and earth in the bottom, set the plant with its ball of roots into it, and fill in firmly all around with fresh soil. Prune and trim the plant, if it is in need of such treatment, water thoroughly, and keep it in partial shade for two or three days, until the more or less disturbed roots begin to feel at home.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE VEGETABLE GARDEN.

Choice varieties of vegetables and fruits are just as easily raised as poor ones, and are ten times more valuable. In the management of many farm-gardens, however, seeds are saved as it may happen, here and there, or bought from the old collections of country stores, and only a small variety chosen at that. The result is a "garden" that would be quite put to shame by the plot of ground behind some "city man's" house, or the cottage of some busy, intelligent mechanic, who appreciates the resources that lie in a bit of Mother Earth, and studies how to make the most of them.

It must be confessed, too, that there is a great deal in emulation and competition. The villager, who is human, doubtless likes his early peas and fine tomatoes for their intrinsic worth. And he likes mightily, also, to catch an occasional passer-by casting admiring eyes at his superior vegetables and clean walks; at any rate, I have never known him to openly resent such glances! The countryman, who, maybe, is too hurried in the morning and too tired at night for weeding walks and training vines, does not always feel this incentive. His garden "looks about as well as other farmers' gardens," and so he is content with a little seeding, a little weeding, and a good deal of rubbish.

Here is another little field for reform in which farmers' wives and daughters can distinguish themselves. Far be it that they should become sun-burned and hand-hardened laborers, like those too patient toilers, the peasant women of the old countries, who do both house-work and field-work! But half an hour each day, lengthened

to an hour occasionally, spent in giving attention to the growing of the best vegetables and luscious fruits, would be a far nobler and more beneficial use of time than devoting it to the ruffing and tucking of sewing-machine work, or the baking and frying of so many "sorts" for the table, or the idle gossip about such a one's new dress, or the last installment of the weak serial story. The majority of farmers' wives and daughters are not given to this wastefulness of time, but many are, and still think they have "no opportunity for putting their noses out of doors!"

Come into the garden, Maude; and bring your mothers and sisters with you, and see what revolution you can create! The young brothers, too, in spite of their proverbial hatred of weeding and hoeing, can have gardening made interesting to them, if they only have a share in the profits, as well as the work—which is simply fair. Let them have a piece of ground, and make their own selection of seeds. Let mothers study up with them on gardening, and let them assist in making labels, saving seeds, starting the early vegetables in boxes, and pruning and grafting, etc. It will be a wonder if their young eyes do not brighten, and their young muscles lend themselves with a will to making "our garden" a success.

The following is a short list of some of the best kinds of Vegetables—a few of which, I am certain, are often lacking in farm-gardens, but which no family will want to miss from their table, after having enjoyed them for one season:

ASPARAGUS.

This delicious esculent, like all other good things, has to be earned, for it requires some care and painstaking to found an asparagus bed. Once made, it will hold its own for ten years or more, sending up its tender shoots close upon the very heels of winter, and affording "a

taste of spring" long before other green things appear. A bed three feet wide and twenty feet long will supply an ordinary family. It must be spaded to three feet in depth, richly manured, and sprinkled with salt. Asparagus can be raised from the seed; or the young plants can be purchased—and so hasten the harvest by a year. Conover's Colossal is one of the best sorts. The plants should be set two and a half feet apart each way. The first spring after planting they should not be cut at all; the second spring half the shoots can be used; afterward, the whole bed can be drawn upon. Always cut the shoots a little below the surface of the ground, and when they are three or four inches high. Every fall the bed must be manured, and stirred up with a fork, disturbing the roots as little as possible.

BEANS.

Dwarf German Wax is one of the best and earliest of String Beans. Its pods are cream color, and are tender and rich. The Giant Wax—a later variety—will supply String Beans until late in the season, requiring more time for cooking than the dwarf variety.

The Cranberry, or Wren's Egg, is the best Pole-bean extant. It is earlier than the Lima, and has a richer flavor. It is an excellent sort for winter cooking—being particularly good when mixed with canned corn as succotash.

BEEFS.

Sow the Dark Red Egyptian for early roots, and the Sea Kale for greens. The latter sends up new leaves as fast as the old ones are cut.

CABBAGE.

The Early Dwarf York, and Jersey Wakefield, for summer use, and the Flat Dutch, for winter, are excel-

lent sorts. The smaller and more compact the head, the better the flavor.

CAULIFLOWER.

This is rather rare in ordinary gardens, and should be more generally cultivated. With a "boiled dinner" it is of finer and richer quality than cabbage, and is also excellent for pickling. Early Erfurt, and a late sort, Le Normand, are the best.

CELERY.

This is another rare edible among farmers. Besides being an excellent relish, and an ornament to the dinner-table, with its curly green leaves and white crisp stalks, it is very beneficial to the human system—being said to aid digestion and tranquilize the nerves. Celery, like Asparagus, needs a little extra culture. It is first sown in a bed, and the plants, when three inches high, are set out in rows six or eight inches apart. Professional gardeners again transplant it, when it is a foot high, into "blanching trenches," but the Dwarf White, and the Boston Market, can be hilled up without moving, and so blanched without much trouble. As the stalks grow, the dirt must be heaped up about them, so that only the top leaves are exposed. A rich soil is needed for its successful growth.

CUCUMBERS.

Early White Spine is one of the best varieties, both for summer use and for pickling.

SWEET CORN.

Farmer's Club, and Moore's Early Concord, stand at the head in this article of good and nutritious food.

It should be planted at two or three different times, and so secured for the table from July to October.

CARROTS.

These vegetables are excellent for flavoring soups, and are also relished by many, if cooked like parsnips or squash. A few fed to a cow every day through the winter will much improve the quality and quantity of her milk. The prettily fringed leaves are nice for the "greens" in bouquets, when green leaves are scarce. Bliss's Improved Long Orange is the best sort.

EGG PLANT.

This attractive vegetable, in the Pekin New Black variety, bears fruit weighing from four to six pounds, and of most excellent flavor. In Northern States the seeds must be started in a hot-bed or in window boxes.

LETTUCE.

Giant's White Cos is a rich, tender variety, and can be used late into the summer. Early Curled Simpson is best for early use.

MELONS.

Be sure to have a fine lot of Skillman's Fine Netted Muskmelons, the earliest and most delicious now grown. The best Watermelons are the Excelsior and Black Spanish.

ONIONS.

Yellow Danvers and Early White Naples will give good satisfaction. The latter is of mild flavor, snow-white, and tender.

PARSNIPS.

The Student, a rather new variety, is the best.

PARSLEY.

This is fine for flavoring soups, salads, and omelets, and for decorating meats and vegetables. Its beautifully curled leaves can also be used in bouquet-making. A bunch of it can be taken up in the fall, cut back a little, and planted in a box in a sunny kitchen window, where it will be convenient for use.

PEAS.

Laxton's Alpha and the Champion of England are both richly-flavored and prolific sorts. McLean's Little Gem is a good early sort, growing but a foot in height, and requiring no support. It is well to plant the three varieties, and so have a succession of nice peas for the table—the Champion being the latest of all.

PEPPERS.

The Large Bell, Sweet Mountain, and Cherry, are desirable—the first two for pickling and the latter for pepper-sauce. The seeds should be started in the house or in a hot-bed in severe climates. The Cherry pepper is very prettily grown in a large flower-pot or box.

POTATOES.

The Peerless, the Early Rose, the Snowflake, and St. Patrick are all excellent sorts. Early Rose has years ago established itself as an early and profuse bearer. The Peerless is a fine potato for keeping. I have found them as firm and sound in June as when first ripened. Queen of the South is the best Sweet Potato for northern gardens.

PUMPKINS.

The Connecticut Field bears away the palm as being the richest and finest grained.

RADISHES.

Give these early esculents a rich, warm bed, against a south wall, where, on chilly nights, a window-sash, or even an old blanket can be laid over them, and in an astonishingly short time they will be large enough for the table. The Long Scarlet, Long White Naples, and Scarlet Olive are all good kinds. When sowing the seeds a thin layer of sand on the top of the bed will increase its warmth and hasten germination.

SPINACH.

This vegetable affords another early dish for spring dinner-tables, and should be grown in every garden. Broad-Leaved Flanders is the earliest and best sort.

SQUASHES.

The Boston Marrow is an excellent sort for fall use, and the old reliable Hubbard the best for winter. For summer use the Scolloped Bush occupies small space and bears profusely.

TURNIPS.

Golden Ball and Buist's Improved Ruta Baga are the best yellow varieties.

TOMATOES.

The Trophy and White Apple are the finest varieties that have yet appeared. In Northern States start the seeds under glass, about the middle of March. When two inches high transplant into little pots or boxes, and when warm weather is established, set them in rows in good, mellow soil, four feet apart. Water them thoroughly and shield from the hot sun and from hard winds

for three or four days. As they grow top-heavy, make supports for them. Clip the ends a little when the fruit begins to appear, and early and magnificent tomatoes will be the result.

HERBS.

Anise, Balm, Horehound, Hyssop, Mint, Saffron, Sage, and Summer Savory, together with Dill and Caraway should all be represented in the kitchen garden, and given good soil and care. They are all easily grown from seed, but in the North it is safest and surest to start them in a hot-bed or in window-boxes. If to be sown in the open ground, do not put them in until the middle of May. Be sure to have the soil pulverized and cover but slightly when the seeds are very small. All herbs should be gathered when in flower, and when dried put into paper bags and labelled. Sage, Savory, Mint, and Thyme are especially useful in the kitchen, while Horehound, Hyssop, and Anise are harmless and oftentimes effectual medicines for mild ailments.

HOW TO MAKE A HOT-BED.

If it can be so arranged it should be built against a shed or a board fence, with its face to the southeast or to the south. Horse-manure is the best to use for this purpose. Make a frame of boards or plank as large as desired, and a foot and a half higher at the back than in front, so as to furnish a slanting support for the glass to rest upon. It should be two feet high in front. Place the manure in the bottom to the depth of a foot and a half. It should be well fermented and warm. Over it spread a few inches of good garden-soil, in which is a fair mixture of sand. Cover the bed with the window-sash and let the sun blaze in upon it through two or three bright days, having taken the precaution to bank the bed

on the outside with soil and manure. Plant the seeds in rows with labelled sticks between each kind. Sprinkle over warm water with a rose-sprinkler, and adjust the sashes. Give the bed fresh air at noon every fair day, and see that the young plants do not suffer for water.

CHAPTER IX.

SMALL FRUITS AND GARDEN FRUIT TREES.

Without undertaking any great detour through the extensive field of Horticulture, I will name some fruits that everybody owning an acre of land, with the blessing of God's sunlight upon it, ought to have. As with vegetables, it involves no more time, labor, or space, to grow good fruits than to grow poor and unimproved sorts. And aside from the not great expense of securing good varieties, there is no reason why the farmer's table, above all tables in the world, should not be supplied, the year round, with these most delicious and healthful of foods, viz: Apples, Cranberries, and dried or canned Berries, for winter and spring; Currants and Strawberries for early summer; Raspberries, Blackberries, and Melons from July to September; Grapes, Pears, Plums and Peaches throughout the autumn. What a magnificent bill of fare! And all, with the exception of large apple trees, can be grown upon an acre of ground.

APPLES.

Among Apples suited to garden inclosures is the Tetofsky, which has this hard name because it is a Russian

apple. It only requires ten feet of space, bears at an early age, and affords ripe fruit in July and August. The apples are fair-sized, bright golden-yellow, with a red stripe, mildly acid, and richly aromatic. It is a hardy tree.

Among Crab-apples the Montreal Beauty, Hyslop, and Transcendent, are the best sorts.

Every farmer should have in his orchard the luscious Red Astrachan and Fall Jenneting, for early use, and for winter the Westfield Seek-no-Further, and the Golden Pippin.

BERRIES.

In these fruits a little investment of money brings prompt and large returns. Fifty Strawberry plants and a few "canes" of Raspberries will, in two years, load the family table with their generous fruitage.

Strawberries.—Monarch of the West is one of the best berries for family use, being large, tender, mildly acid, and very productive. The Great American is an immense berry, being exhibited at fairs seven, eight, and nine inches in circumference. It is quite a new variety, and a few plants of it would make an interesting "garden" for some ambitious farm-boy or girl to look after. For market culture the old Wilson's Seedling seems to be unsurpassed.

Raspberries.—Mammoth Cluster and Gregg are the finest of the Black Caps. Turner and Herstine are good and hardy red sorts, and Antwerp Yellow is a creamy orange berry of good quality and flavor.

Raspberries should be planted in rich, mellow soil, three or four canes to the hill. After the berry harvest is over each fall, the old stalks or canes should be cut out, as it is the new ones that bear the next year's fruit, and they will be far more vigorous and productive from having the field to themselves.

Blackberries.—The Lawton and Early Wilson bear fruit of enormous size, and well repay good cultivation.

Gooseberries.—Smith's Improved is moderate and compact in growth, and largely productive, thus recommending itself for garden culture. Roe's Early Ruby is another excellent sort.

Currants.—The Black Naples is a large, fine sort, excellent for wine and jelly. The White Grape is an early and profuse bearer, and the Red Cherry, a sort that should be grown in every garden in place of the small, common variety.

GRAPES.

In Europe "grape-cures" are established, to which all sorts of debilitated, blood-poisoned people go, to live—aside from a little bread—entirely upon grapes, sunlight, and pure air for weeks at a time. It is one of the "regulations" that these happy invalids must pick their own grapes, and, as their appetites rapidly increase, it is no doubt a fact that they owe, in part, their recoveries, which are generally certain, to the almost constant sunlight and the invigorating mountain air in which they pass their waking hours.

Grape-cures, or almost any kind of fruit-cures, might be established in our own gardens and on our own hillsides. The prescription is a very simple one; enough of sound, ripe fruit (eaten at regular intervals) to satisfy hunger, the fruit to be picked by the invalids themselves, thus insuring pure air, sunlight, and mild exercise. The grape is one of the best and purest of tonics, and eaten, as it is in such instances, almost exclusively, a cleansed and purified system is the result, with all its happy manifestations in brightened eyes, clear and ruddy complexions, tranquil nerves, and active mental and physical powers. Beginning with currants—which are almost

equal to grapes, medicinally—and eating one's way through strawberries, raspberries, and blackberries, into the pears, plums, and grapes of autumn, accompanying the course with the best of wheat-bread, morning baths, plenty of sleep, plenty of bright, dry, out-door air and pleasant exercise, would build a weakened constitution up "as good as new."

First upon my list of Grapes I should place the early and delicious Delaware, a single cluster of which fills a room with delightful, fruity aroma. It is a sweet, juicy, thin-skinned grape, growing in compact bunches, in color a light, half-transparent red. It is one of the best sorts for the table, and particularly suited, on account of its early ripening, to the extreme Northern States.

The Lady is a new white grape, also early. It is large, sweet, rich, and thin-skinned. At present it is sold at a higher price than the more plentiful sorts.

The Clinton is a vigorous, hardy, profuse-bearing grape, not so good for eating, but excellent for wine and jelly.

The Catawba and Isabella are among the best varieties, but, being late in ripening, are sometimes cut off by frosts in the Northern States.

PEARS.

In this most desirable fruit the Bartlett and a new sort, the Souvenir de Congress, are the best to choose for summer ripening, the latter being in perfection early in August. Swan's Orange, Seckel, and Vicar of Winkfield, are splendid fall and winter sorts.

PLUMS.

Choose the Lombard, Golden Drop, and Imperial Gage.

PEACHES.

Barnard's Yellow Rare-ripe, Large Early York, and Mixon's Free, are all first-class varieties. It is a consoling fact to people living above the peach "belt" that this fruit is now so nicely preserved by the "evaporation" process. It is much cheaper than the canned fruit, and when gently stewed in a thin white-sugar syrup is very delicious.

CHAPTER X.

THE BEST FOODS—AND SOME BEST METHODS OF PREPARING THEM.

"The best human food," writes an eminent physician, "I believe to be Wheat—the king of grains! It contains all the flesh-forming, nerve-producing, bone-making, fat-creating elements of nutrition. Bread is, indeed, the Staff of Life, and wheat is the perfection of bread. I know of no article of food which so perfectly sustains all the powers of the human system as wheat properly cooked and eaten in its integrity."

By integrity the Doctor means in its complete and unadulterated wholeness.

There is no division as to the desirableness of pure wheat flour. No one wants to eat chalk, alum, or plaster of Paris, and the farmer who has his wheat ground under his own eyes, and his bread made at home, is happily spared all "refinements" of this sort in his daily loaf.

The open question is, whether the fine, white portion of the wheat alone, or the whole grain ground together,

makes the healthiest bread for the human family—the majority of investigators favoring the whole grain.

Prof. Thurber says : “In fine flour the percentage of starch is much greater, and that of the albuminoids and earthy matters less, than in the whole grain ; consequently this is not so nutritious as a flour which more nearly represents the wheat itself. Pure ‘Graham’ flour should consist of the whole wheat ground fine, but much that is sold under this name is merely bran and shorts subjected to a second grinding. Properly made, Graham flour is very nutritious, but, owing to the amount of crude fibre it contains, it irritates the bowels of weak persons.”

New ways of grinding have been invented, by which simply the hull or bran is removed and the wheat then ground, which makes a fine, and at the same time, a most nutritious flour. And this must be the flour to be chosen by those who hold in the hollow of their hands, so to speak, the health of the family.

Without waiting for the new processes any farmer can have his wheat ground into genuine, honest Graham, reserving a portion of the grist for “fine flour” for occasional use, or for any unfortunately “weak persons” in the family with whom Graham may disagree.

Boiled Wheat.—Wheat boiled or steamed until it cracks open, and eaten either cold or warm with good, rich milk, and sugar, if liked, makes an excellent breakfast dish, and also a good dessert for dinner.

Wheat Mush.—Coarsely ground wheat stirred into salted boiling water, cooked for twenty minutes, and served with milk and sugar is, as Dr. Nichols declares, “one of the nicest and best forms of food, and very hearty.” A good sized steel coffee-mill might be used for “cracking” the wheat, as enough for half a dozen persons can be ground in five minutes.

Wheat Bread.—It would be superfluous to tell the majority of farmers' wives how to make good bread, but possibly some young or inexperienced reader may derive benefit from these recipes :

If dry yeast is used, dissolve one cake in a little warm water, with enough flour for a thin batter, and let it stand in a warm place until light and foamy before proceeding to mix the sponge. If hop or potato yeast is used, be certain that it is fresh and sweet, as no good bread can be made with poor yeast. Use a cupful for four loaves of bread.

Sift six quarts of flour into a pan or bread-bowl, sprinkle over it a teaspoonful of salt, make a hole in the center for the yeast, which pour in and stir slowly in enough of luke-warm water to make a soft dough of all the flour. Beat thoroughly with a strong iron or wooden spoon, cover with a pan, and set it by the stove, or under thick cloths, until morning. Then knead it from twenty minutes to half an hour, and let it rise again in the pan. When light, divide the dough into four loaves, with not more than five minutes kneading, and place them in buttered pans to rise. When they are light and spongy to the touch they are ready for the oven. The oven should be briskly hot at first, and then tempered down to milder heat. From forty-five minutes to an hour is required for the baking. When done slip them from the pans and cover with a light cloth.

Another excellent way to make bread, and one which always involves the freshest and best of yeast, is as follows : Reserve three or four boiled potatoes from those cooked for dinner, mash them while warm with a little salt, pour over them three pints of boiling water, and stir in two large cupfuls of flour. When this batter is cooled to luke-warm heat, add a yeast-cake, previously dissolved in water, as in the first recipe, and keep it near the stove. In the evening stir in flour enough for a soft dough, and

let it stand, warmly covered in winter, until morning. Then give it a vigorous kneading for twenty minutes, or more, preparing it for the oven as in the foregoing recipe.

Graham Bread.—The best Graham bread is made by taking a portion of the “sponge,” or thin batter, set for white bread, and kneading into it enough of Graham flour to make it into loaves. If liked a tablespoonful of brown sugar may be added to each loaf.

A Good Yeast.—To six thoroughly mashed potatoes, add a small cupful of white sugar, a teaspoonful of ginger, and a teaspoonful of salt. Place all in a kettle or pan upon the stove, and pour over it three pints of boiling water, in which a handful of hops has been steeped. Stir in flour enough for a thin batter, and set aside to become nearly cool, when a cupful of yeast, or two dissolved cakes of dry yeast, must be added. Keep the pan in a moderately warm place, and entirely undisturbed until it becomes light; then stir it down and let it rise again. It must then be poured into a jug or jar, and put away in as cool a place as possible. A large cupful will be sufficient for four good sized loaves of bread.

When Bread is Fit to be Eaten.—Bread cannot be said to be “done” until it has been out of the oven at least twelve hours. A mouthful of fresh-baked bread lies upon the stomach very much like a leaden bullet; and the wise house-keeper will endeavor to keep the bread-box so supplied that there may be no necessity for cutting an unripe loaf, in which the spongy cells caused by fermentation have had no time to harden into the palatable form which distinguishes bread from dough.

Substitutes for Bread.—By keeping plenty of white and Graham bread in readiness for the table, those miserable substitutes, salaratus biscuits, short-cakes, and the like, will seldom be resorted to. In fact there are very few kinds of biscuits, rolls, muffins, and other hot breads,

but are more beneficial to the human stomach if left off the bill of fare altogether. But sometimes emergencies arise in which it becomes necessary for the house-keeper to whisk up something of the sort, and I give such recipes as are the least pernicious, and, at the same time, the least trouble to follow. Besides, they have been found to be very palatable :

Cream Puffs.—One cupful of sour cream, one cupful of sweet milk, two eggs, a little salt, and enough of sifted flour for a smooth, but not stiff batter. Beat all thoroughly together for five minutes, and add half a teaspoonful of soda dissolved in a little water. Stir again briskly. Have the oven and the gem-irons at a lively heat. Drop the batter into the buttered irons and bake until the puffs are delicately browned. Slip them from the irons upon a warm plate and cover with a napkin.

Graham Puffs.—Beat one quart of sweet milk and one quart of sifted Graham flour together for ten minutes. (An egg-whisk is excellent to use in this case, as the perfection of the puffs depends upon the thorough whipping of the batter and the proper heat of the oven.) Add two beaten eggs and a teaspoonful of salt. Bake the same as Cream Puffs. Half these quantities can be used for a family of three or four persons.

Wheat or Corn Muffins.—Mix into one quart of wheat flour, or one pint of corn-meal, two beaten eggs, a little salt, and enough of rich sweet milk to make a thick batter. Add a teaspoonful of Royal Baking Powder, beat well together, and bake in buttered muffin rings, or a muffin pan, in a brisk oven. When done, cover them for a few minutes with a light cloth, then slip them from the rings or pan and send to the table on a warm plate with a napkin over them.

Baked Corn Grits.—Stir a cupful of hominy or grits into a quart of boiling salted water, and cook for twenty

minutes. When cool, add two eggs and beat it thoroughly. Bake it in a shallow, well-buttered pan for twenty minutes, and cut into squares for the table.

Pioneer Johnny-Cake.—Over two cupfuls of sifted corn-meal sprinkle a teaspoonful of salt and two teaspoonfuls of sugar, and add boiling water—be sure that it is boiling—until a thick batter is formed. Place a thick-bottomed frying-pan or “spider” upon the stove, well rubbed with a piece of salt pork or suet. Pour in the batter, place a tin cover over, and let it bake slowly for twenty minutes, when turn it with a broad-bladed knife and bake for ten minutes more.

Green-Corn Cakes.—Two cupfuls of grated sweet-corn, half a teaspoonful of salt, two beaten eggs, one cupful of new milk, a large teaspoonful of Royal Baking Powder, flour enough for a thin batter. Beat all thoroughly together and pour into gem-irons to bake. Or it may be baked in a tin and cut into squares.

Corn Starch Crackers.—Three cupfuls of flour, one cupful of corn starch, half a teaspoonful of salt, and one teaspoonful of baking powder. Sift all together in a pan, and rub in one teaspoonful of nice lard. Then add a sufficient quantity of sweet milk to form a dough. Knead it for a few minutes and let it stand covered with a cloth for a quarter of an hour; ten minutes will answer in summer. Then roll the dough out very thin, cut in round cakes, prick them with a fork, lay them on buttered tins, brush the tops with a cloth dipped in milk, and bake in a brisk oven from eight to ten minutes. These crackers are nice, warm or cold, and excellent for school lunches and pic-nic occasions.

Sunday Morning Rolls.—One and a half pint of new milk, one cupful of hop yeast, half a teaspoonful of salt, and flour enough for forming dough, which must be covered and left to rise over night. In the morning add the

whites of two eggs well beaten, half a cupful of butter, and flour enough for kneading. Knead the dough briskly for ten minutes, roll it out to the thickness of half an inch, cut in four-inch squares, brush the tops with sweet milk, and fold them over cornerwise; place them close together in buttered pans and set in a warm place to rise until light, when bake in a quick oven.

Fried Corn Mush.—This is a nice breakfast dish when prepared in the following way: Dip cold, firm slices of properly cooked mush first in beaten and salted eggs, and then in fine bread crumbs or rolled crackers, and fry them in a kettle of boiling lard until nicely browned. The mush does not absorb the lard, and is much nicer than when merely “stewed” in a frying-pan, as it so often is.

Steamed Corn Bread.—This, like most preparations of corn-meal, is best eaten in winter, when the system is in need of warmth-producing foods. Pour a pint of boiling milk on half a pint of sifted corn-meal. When cool add a teaspoonful of melted butter, two tablespoonfuls of syrup, a little salt, and three well-beaten eggs. Stir well together and pour into a buttered bowl or granitized pan, place it in a steamer and steam it steadily for two hours and a half; then place it in the oven for ten minutes to brown.

Rice Muffins.—Two cupfuls of cold boiled rice, two eggs, a little salt, a tablespoonful of melted butter, one cupful of sweet milk, and two cupfuls of flour in which is mixed a teaspoonful of baking powder. Beat all thoroughly and bake in a muffin-pan, filling the rings about half full. A cupful of sour milk, and half a teaspoonful of soda, can be substituted for the sweet milk and baking powder, if more convenient, and the batter can be baked in a common tin and cut into squares when served.

OATMEAL.

"Next to wheat," says Dr. Nichols, "I rank Oatmeal." It is very rich in nutriment, and with the accompaniment of the pure milk and cream which every farmer has at hand, it is so nice and palatable it is a wonder it is not a familiar form of food in every American farmhouse. And yet, after many visits to the country, one of the good things which I hail with delight on my return to the city, is a breakfast saucer of oatmeal mush and real cream, surmounted with a slowly-dissolving lump of crushed sugar!

Far more expensive dishes are heaped upon the tables of these good and generous country friends. There is no lack of preserves, fruit-cake, rich pies, and the like; but the good, healthful, simple offerings of nature—the grains cooked in their "integrity," the noble army of vegetables nicely prepared, the creamy omelettes, the best fruits, the perfect bread, the fragrant amber coffee—how very queer that one finds these things on twenty tables in the city where he finds them on one table in the country!—the place where, with the exception of a very few foreign articles, everything necessary for the best and most healthful living abounds on every hand. Farm-homes should not be subservient, as they often are, particularly in the West, to mere wheat and pork raising. They should have more fruits, larger varieties of vegetables, and more intelligent and healthful methods of preparing foods.

One little move in this direction might be a morning dish of oatmeal mush (or oat grits, as it might more properly be called), with an accompaniment of good, rich milk, and a sprinkle of sugar, in place of the almost universal "fried pork" with which country people break their fast. It is not only palatable and nourishing to

children and "weak persons," but is hearty and full of bone and sinew to laboring men.

Oatmeal, being now used so extensively in this country, is much cheaper than it was years ago, and can always be obtained, sweet and fresh, in city and town markets; but in small country places, where the demand for it from the farming regions around is light, it is apt to lie on the dealers' hands so long that it becomes stale and bitter, and no doubt disgusts many a country experimenter in its merits. The genuine "oatmeal" of the markets always comes in clear, solid little grains or grits, and is sold at about six cents per pound. It swells immensely when cooked, one cupful of grits making mush enough for four or five persons.

Oatmeal Mush.—Slowly stir a large cupful of grits into a little more than a quart of salted boiling water. When well mixed, set the dish or kettle containing it into a tin or a stew-pan in which there is boiling water. Cover the mush and let it cook, without stirring, for twenty minutes. The pan of water prevents all burning or scorching, and the grain is cooked without being mashed into a starchy compound by frequent stirring. In some weather the water evaporates rapidly, and more may be needed before the cooking is completed. The mush can be eaten warm at breakfast, or it can be poured into a pudding mold and eaten as dessert for dinner, with cream and sugar. In the latter case, a handful of raisins or nice dried currants might be occasionally boiled with the grits. Or the pudding might be served with apple marmalade. It is always good, however, when perfectly plain.

RICE.

There is a good and an indifferent way to cook rice. The indifferent way is to throw the rice into boiling water, stir it to death as it cooks, and serve it in blue,

soggy masses that are only rendered palatable by plenty of cream and sugar, or some kind of rich pudding sauce.

The good way is to soak a large cupful of rice in cold water for two or three hours—or even over night; then turn off the water, put the rice into an earthen or granitized dish; pour over it a quart of new milk sufficiently salted, and set the dish into another containing boiling water—the same as in cooking oatmeal. Cover it closely, and let it cook for an hour without any stirring. When served, its superiority to indifferently cooked rice will be decidedly apparent. Rice-boilers, which can be used for oatmeal, wheat, hominy, and the like, are manufactured expressly for cooking grains in this way; but they are quite expensive, and the above method, although not quite so “handy,” answers very well.

FRUITS—FRESH AND PRESERVED.

“If every one would eat an orange or two every morning before breakfast,” says a clear-headed doctor, “I should soon lose all my patients!”

Fortunately for the doctor, every one cannot have one or two oranges, or even half an orange, before breakfast. And particularly in the country are they an expensive luxury.

But there are many substitutes for oranges, which are both delicious and plentiful, and if we can add so much to our stock of Good Health as this physician intimates, by breaking the night’s fast with a little fresh fruit, we ought not to be slow in adopting such an agreeable prescription, and providing, as far as possible, a plentiful supply. Toward the end of winter, and through the spring months, nothing is so grateful and beneficial to the system as fruit—not the sweet “preserves,” but the fresh or nicely canned article; if these cannot be had, use the dried fruits stewed, and just palatably sweetened.

“The amount of nutriment in the juicy fruits,” says Dr. Nichols, “is not large, but it is excellent in quality; and the juices of grapes, peaches, oranges, pears, strawberries, currants, cherries, raspberries, and cranberries have a most benign and purifying effect upon the system.” The more pulpy fruits, such as apples, bananas, figs, dates, plums, etc., are not only very nutritious, but exceedingly healthful. “A dish of stewed prunes or apples, or a few figs, eaten daily, is a sure cure for constipation. Plums are certainly better than pills! And even when fruit is costly, it is less costly than physic. There is no telling the beneficial influence of the annual orange crop in mid-winter upon the health of the large cities of the world.”

In an article on “Food Cures,” Dr. Hall prescribes Watermelons for painful and feverish “summer complaints,” and for fevers of all sorts; the fresh juice of Apples for nervous dyspepsia, and the free use of raw, ripe, and perfectly sound fruit for both constipation and the opposite condition; for sluggish livers, and for listless appetites.

So because fruit is so beneficial, as well as delicious, every house-keeper should adopt all possible means for maintaining a good variety for the table the year round. Aside from Good Bread, there is no item in Nature’s “bill of fare” that will so bounteously reward one’s labors to obtain it.

A good variety of Apples—especially of the late-keeping sorts—with a barrel of Cranberries (that sound, clean, brave-keeping fruit, that is such a blessing to spring-time tables!) will go far in supplying the family with wholesome fruit, and, with a few cans or jugs of peaches, pears, plums, and currants, and the different sorts of berries—particularly red and black raspberries, which keep their flavor so perfectly—the months between December and the time of fresh fruit will be bountifully bridged

over, and the family can have, every day, a taste of summer-time.

In the country one has every advantage for successfully canning fruits. They can be gathered at just the right stage of ripeness, and put up while perfectly fresh. And if the glass cans, which are, of course, nicer than jugs and jars, are bought in quantities, the expense is not great, considering that with good care they will last for years.

Half-gallon jugs, with wide mouths, can be used for tomatoes, currants, blueberries, and, in fact, all the small fruits, if sufficient care is taken to seal them up completely; and as they will not break when the hot fruit is poured into them, and need no "parboiling," like glass, it is considerably less trouble to use them. The corks should be pressed in tightly and melted sealing-wax poured plentifully over.

Most house-keepers, however, will prefer glass. One can be sure that it is scrupulously clean. Also, it is a pleasure to survey the glistening rows of cans, and observe through their transparent sides how beautifully the peaches and strawberries are conducting themselves! Jugs, however, might be used for tomatoes, pumpkin, string-beans, pie-plant, etc., and even if the sealing-wax should sometimes prove treacherous, the loss of the contents would not be so very deplorable. To have half a gallon of Antwerp raspberries fermenting over a cellar shelf would be another affair!

It is not necessary that the canning of fruit should be made an herculean task. Jars and jugs, filled every morning and baking-day through the fruit-season, will make up a large winter supply without special conflagration in the cook-stove, or long hours of woman-roasting.

Always place glass jars in a pan of water with a board beneath them, and let the water come to scalding heat before pouring in the hot fruit. Quart cans are generally

the best to use, as if one becomes cracked, it is not so great a loss.

CANNED FRUITS.

Pears.—Small pears can be put up whole, after being pared ; but the fine large ones must be cut in quarters, and the cores removed. Scald them in a clean syrup of white sugar and water, scalding a few at a time, that they may keep their form. When the jars are nearly filled, pour the syrup in until quite filled, and put on the covers. A few spoonfuls of clear honey poured over canned pears, when served, improves their flavor.

Strawberries.—Place as much loaf or granulated sugar in a preserving-kettle as would make the strawberries sweet enough for immediate eating (this being the rule for all canned fruits), and add water enough to keep it from burning as it dissolves. When it boils, pour in the berries, and stir them gently two or three times, so that all may be evenly scalded. Then pour them into the jars and seal.

Peaches.—Pear and cut them in halves. Take all the pits, and boil them in a little water to extract their flavor. Strain this water into the preserving-kettle, and as it boils, pour in the peaches, sprinkling over them the necessary amount of sugar. When well scalded, and poured in the cans, place round white papers, dipped in brandy, over the tops, and put on the covers.

Raspberries, Blackberries, Blueberries, and Currants, are all easily canned in their own juices, with a little water at the bottom of the kettle, to prevent burning.

Plums.—These fruits should be canned without being pared—scalding them until the skins burst open, in a white sugar syrup.

Apples.—Sometimes early varieties of apples decay faster than it is possible to use them. They can be easily stewed

and canned, and are very good and very convenient for spring-time use when fresh apples are scarce.

CHOICE PRESERVES.

For holiday occasions there are some fruits especially delectable in the form of "preserves," and to have them in perfection is an achievement every housewife may be proud of.

If put up in self-sealing cans like the preceding fruits, only half a pound of sugar is required ; but if stored in jars and bottles, the old rule of "pound for pound" is necessary in order to prevent fermentation.

The canned preserves are to be preferred, first, because they are best ; the fruit-flavor is not lost in an overwhelming sweetness. Secondly, they are less expensive.

A General Rule.—For four pounds of fruit put two pounds of loaf sugar in a nice porcelain kettle or sauce-pan, with one pint of fresh, clear water. When it is dissolved, and before it becomes hot, stir into it the beaten white of an egg. As it boils remove all the scum as fast as it rises until it is perfectly clarified. Then put in a little at a time of whatever fruit is to be preserved, boiling it very gently, and not allowing it to be broken. Only choice, sound fruit should be used. Have ready the glass cans in a pan of water after the usual manner of canning. As the first is done, place it carefully in the cans, until all is scalded, then pour the syrup in and seal.

Strawberries should be hardly more than scalded in the syrup, while plums, peaches, apricots, and pears can remain in a little longer. I think the preserve is improved by "boiling down" the syrup one-third before pouring it over the fruit.

Marmalades—*A General Rule.*—This preparation of fruit is excellent for eating with the morning dish of oatmeal and cream ; or with milk-toast ; or with rice,

sago, and tapioca puddings. And it is healthy and toothsome if spread on children's bread in place of butter.

The fruit for marmalades must be fresh and well ripened. Plums and other pulpy fruits must be stewed in a little water, and then sifted through a colander. Peaches, apples and quinces must be pared and sliced. To every pound of pulp allow half a pound of coffee-sugar, and set it to boil gradually, that it may not be ruined by scorching. From half to three-quarters of an hour is usually long enough to boil the marmalade, but it is not done until it looks transparent and becomes quite firm and thick when cooled in a saucer.

Apple marmalade is sometimes improved by a little ginger-root pounded and tied in a thin muslin cloth, and boiled with it.

Small bowls are nice for storing marmalades and jellies, which can be poured into them while hot, and when wanted for the table they come out in good form.

All marmalades, jellies, and jams should be first cooled in the bowls or glasses, and then covered with papers cut out to fit, dipped in brandy and placed directly on the fruit. Then paper should be placed over the top and pasted down at the sides—while mother's little boy or girl will be proud to write labels for them.

Currant Jelly.—Have just-ripe fruit fresh from the bushes. It is not necessary to remove it from the stems, but look it over carefully. Place about a pint of the fruit, at a time, in a stout cloth, squeeze out the juice, and strain it through a flannel bag. Have ready some white sugar, measured in pints or quarts, boiling and clarified, in the preserving kettle. Then for every pint of sugar pour in a pint of the strained juice, and allow it to boil until it will drop in a lumpy way from the spoon.

Twenty minutes is given as a rule, but it often becomes jelly in less time.

Grape Jelly.—This is most delicious when made from the cultivated sorts. The little Delaware makes jelly of beautiful color and rich, aromatic flavor. It is made in the same way as currant jelly. Wild grapes make a jelly that is excellent for various things in cooking.

Apple and Plum Jelly.—If the fresh fruit can be crushed in a press, and the juice carefully strained, the jelly will be clearer and finer than when the fruit is stewed in order to get the juice. The yellow Crab-apple makes a deep amber-colored jolly, and the blue or Damson plum a rich ruby.

To Crystalize Cherries, Currants, and Grapes.—Select perfect fruits and leave them on their stems. Beat the whites of two eggs to a stiff froth, in which dip the fruits and lay them on a sieve to drain for a few minutes. Then roll them, cluster by cluster, in a dish of pulverized sugar, and lay them on white paper in a nearly cooled oven, or before a window where a brisk breeze is blowing. When dried put them away in a cool, dry closet. They make a very pretty and delicious dessert.

Baked Quinces.—Bake sound, ripe ones until thoroughly done. When cool, remove the skins, roll them in granulated sugar, place in a glass dish, and serve with sweet cream.

Baked Pears.—Good pears when ripe are always best in their natural state, but when they are hard or of inferior quality, they can be prepared after the recipe for Baked Quinces.

Steamed Sweet Apples.—These are excellent for supper. Pare, quarter, and core them; place them in an earthen dish in a steamer, cover closely, and let them steam until tender. When cold, sprinkle with a little sugar, and pour over them a pint of rich milk.

Baked Apples.—These are improved by paring, re-

moving the core without splitting them, filling the cavities with sugar, and baking them in an earthen dish in which is a cupful of water.

Apple Cream.—Pare and slice six fine pleasantly flavored apples; steam them, or stew them in a very little water until soft; add four tablespoonfuls of white sugar and the whites of four fresh eggs; beat together until light, and place in a glass or tall fruit dish with cream poured around.

A Pretty Dish of Currants.—Red and white currants can be placed in layers in a clear glass fruit-dish; or by placing pieces of pasteboard between, they can be arranged in stripes or squares on a flat dish, and the papers removed after it is filled. Currant leaves should be placed around the edge. A dish of pulverized sugar should always be served with currants and berries, that each one may sweeten the fruit to his own taste.

PICKLES AND CATSUPS.

Spiced Peaches.—For seven pounds of peaches use three and a half pounds of good brown sugar, one quart of the best vinegar, two ounces of stick cinnamon, and one ounce of whole cloves. Pare the peaches and stick three or four cloves in each. Boil the sugar, vinegar, and cinnamon for a few minutes, and then put in the peaches. When tender, remove them to glass or stone jars, boil down the syrup nearly one-half, and pour it over the peaches.

Spiced Currants, Crab-Apples, and Green Tomatoes.—These can be made by using the same proportions of sugar, vinegar, and spices named in the recipe for Spiced Peaches—all being good relishes to eat occasionally with meats.

Tomato Catsup.—Boil one peck of ripe tomatoes in a preserving kettle until reduced to a pulp. Add one pint

of good cider vinegar, half a cupful of salt, one cupful of sugar, a teaspoonful of Cayenne pepper, a teaspoonful of cloves, two of allspice, and three of celery-salt. Boil for twenty minutes and then strain and bottle it. The corks should be pressed in tightly and the tops covered with melted rosin or sealing-wax. The catsup is improved to many tastes by the addition of two or three onions boiled with the tomatoes.

Salted Cucumbers.—If salt is added to water until an egg will float in it, a brine is formed that will keep cucumbers for almost any length of time. They can be picked from the vines when of nice size, washed, and thrown in the brine until the keg or barrel is filled—always keeping them well under the brine with some suitable weight.

Cucumber Pickles.—If salted cucumbers are used, soak them in frequently changed water for two days. Boil together for fifteen minutes two quarts of good vinegar, one ounce of whole pepper, one cupful of brown sugar, and a piece of alum as large as a bean. Pour it over the cucumbers while hot. When cool, drain off the vinegar, scald it and pour it over the pickles once more. In twenty-four hours they will be ready for use.

Chow-chow Pickle.—Chop one peck of green tomatoes with four solid little cabbages, six onions, and six green bell-peppers. Sprinkle over a cupful of salt and let the mixture stand over night in a large earthen pan or porcelain kettle. In the morning drain off the juice and add to the chop two pounds of brown sugar, one cupful of English mustard-seed, and a gallon of vinegar. Boil until it is tender and clear, and then put it away in jars or wide-mouthed bottles.

Mixed Pickles.—Cauliflower, string-beans, and tiny onions and cucumbers, with a sprinkle of red cherry-peppers, can be scalded together, first in salted water and

then in vinegar, and put up in bottles, with a little sweet-oil poured in each to cover the tops before the corks are put in.

Pickled Onions.—Remove two or three layers from small white onions, and lay them in a strong brine for a day or more. Place vinegar on the stove to boil, with one or two bell-peppers, or a handful of the cherry-peppers. Remove the onions from the brine and pour the hot vinegar over them.

THE VALUE OF MILK AND EGGS.

Next to Bread and Fruit, in the scale of Best Foods, comes Milk in its various forms—in its fresh, foamy newness, in luscious cream, and in the concentrations of butter and cheese. In Milk and Eggs, as in Bread, exist nearly all the qualities needed for nutrition and growth. Authentic tables show that cheese is worth, as nutriment, three times as much as the same weight of beef; that it is “precisely the same as beef in its flesh-forming qualities; and, what is more, presents itself in a much purer form.” Milk is not only the food for “babes,” giving them flesh, and bone, and muscle, and blood, and making them, with the help of warmth and fresh air, the fair types of purity, health, and beauty, but it is better for grown-up children—if they but knew it—than the “strong meat” with which they think they must fortify themselves, and which costs so much more, both in the buying and in the preparation.

Yet good meats are a requisite. It is well to take vegetation now and then, in the concentrated form of a fine roast of beef, or leg of mutton; while a fried brook trout, or a broiled white fish, lying in its fringe of Saratoga potatoes and parsley, is never to be passed lightly by! It is only in feeling that meat is the staple, the indispensable basis of good living, that one goes wrong.

So many delicious things, not only delicious to the palate, but deliciously nourishing to the whole system, can be placed upon our dining-room tables without slaughtering anything!—ay, and without diving down into the unlovely recesses of the PORK BARREL—that “household god” of the country which I would like to demolish, no, not demolish, but cause to step down several steps to its proper place below bread, fruit, milk, eggs, beef, mutton, fish, and vegetables!

“Pork is a coarse food fit only for coarse people,” snaps our good Dr. Nichols. But he lives in a large city where the antecedents of his pork are unknown, and he has unavoidable thoughts about the insidious *trichina*, a touch of measles, or the questionable diet on which so much fatness has been achieved.

A clean pig—and such a thing is possible if the animal is given a decent place to live in—fattened on one’s own corn, and slain and cured by one’s own hands, is always a good item to have among one’s provision stores. But even this perfection of pork should form an occasional and not an every-day article of food.

With wheat, corn, oatmeal, milk, fruit, eggs, and vegetables to draw from, country people can live on the finest foods that the world affords; and that, too, without devoting too much time to the art of cooking. Generally, the simplest things are the best, and it is just as easy to prepare palatable and nourishing food as the reverse.

OMELETS.

Cream Omelet.—Mix smoothly with a cupful of sweet cream, a tablespoonful of flour, and add five well-beaten eggs and a pinch of salt. Have ready an omelet pan or a thick-bottomed “spider,” in which place a small lump of sweet suet-fat, which is better than butter, because less liable to burn. Have the pan hot enough to bake,

but not to burn the omelet. Pour in the eggs and cream, and when the mixture has thickened, but not hardened, fold one-half over the other with a broad-bladed knife, slip it upon a warm platter, and serve. Omelets should not be made until the meal is nearly ready, as they are apt to become tough and leathery if kept waiting too long.

Ham Omelet.—Have ready a cupful of chopped boiled ham. Beat together six eggs and six tablespoonfuls of milk; pour half into the pan, and sprinkle over it the chopped ham. When the eggs are partly thickened, pour in the remaining portion, and set it in the oven to brown on the top. Slip it upon a round platter without folding, and place a few sprigs of parsley, if they are to be had, around the edges.

Vegetable Omelet.—Chop an onion finely together with two crisp heads of lettuce; season with salt and pepper, and stir in six eggs and three tablespoonfuls of cream. Bake the same as Cream Omelet.

Cheese Omelet.—Beat six eggs, half a cupful of grated cheese, and six tablespoonfuls of milk together, and bake rather slowly.

Sweet Omelet.—This is a specially good edible for the supper table. For each person, take one egg, two teaspoonfuls of white sugar, and one teaspoonful of flour. Flavor the omelet with either extract of orange, vanilla, or nutmeg. Beat the yolks, sugar, and flour together, reserving the whites to be added last. Have the omelet-pan at proper heat, and well buttered. Beat the whites to a froth, stir all lightly and quickly together, and pour it into the pan. When nearly done, set the pan carefully into the oven to brown. Then slip the omelet upon a plate covered with a napkin, spread over it some raspberry jam, or nice preserved fruit of some sort, fold one half over the other, cover with another napkin, and ring the tea-bell! This recipe has a fussy sound, but the

omelet is made in a very few minutes, and will be pronounced delicious by all.

CUSTARDS AND PUDDINGS.

If overdone, all custards are curdled and spoiled. They should be smooth and creamy, when eaten, and as cold as the ice-chest or cellar can make them.

Baked Custards.—Mix one and a half pints of new milk, one cupful of sweet cream, four well beaten eggs, one cupful of white sugar, one teaspoonful of orange, lemon, or vanilla extract. Fill the custard-cups, or any small tea-cups, two-thirds full. Put them into a baking-pan containing hot water, and let them remain in the oven until the custard is set, remembering that it will continue to cook for a minute or two after being removed from the oven. If liked, the whites of two eggs can be whisked to a froth, flavored, sprinkled with a little sugar, and piled on top of the custards when they are partly cooled.

Boiled Custard.—Put one quart of new milk in a sauce-pan over the fire, and when it begins to boil, stir in five beaten eggs and four tablespoonfuls of sugar; stir it until it thickens slightly, then remove to a cool place, and add whatever flavoring is liked.

Corn-starch Custard.—While a quart of milk is heating, beat two eggs until light, and stir into them four tablespoonfuls of sugar, one tablespoonful of corn-starch, and one tablespoonful of cold milk. Pour this mixture gradually into the boiling milk, and let it cook gently, stirring it all the while, for five minutes. Flavor with a little extract of orange or lemon, and pour it into the dish from which it is to be served.

Cocoanut Custard.—Soak a cupful of dessicated cocoanut in an equal quantity of new milk for two hours, and add it to the materials used in the recipe for Baked Custards.

Corn-starch Pudding.—Stir two tablespoonfuls of corn-starch, mixed with cold milk, into three pints of boiling milk slightly salted. Let it stand where it will cook without burning for ten minutes; then stir in one cupful of sugar and the yolks of three eggs, with whatever flavoring is liked; pour the pudding into a mold, or into a large bowl, that has been dipped in cold water, and set it in a cool place. When it is wanted for the table, turn the pudding into a glass or earthen dish, and serve it with a fruit-sauce, or with cream and sugar.

Tapioca and Sago Puddings.—Tapioca and sago make delicious puddings, especially when one has cream and fruit to serve with them. They are also easily made, requiring but little time either in the preparing or the baking, and are good whether warm or cold. Stir a cupful of sago or tapioca that has soaked several hours in cold water into a quart of boiling milk. Add two teaspoonfuls of corn-starch mixed with a little milk, three beaten eggs, four tablespoonfuls of sugar, and a pinch of salt. Stir well, pour it into a buttered dish, and bake it twenty minutes. If preferred, the bottom of the dish may be first covered with canned apples, peaches, or pears; or a handful of raisins, soaked in warm water, may be added.

Steamed Corn-meal Pudding.—This is very relishable with a winter dinner of corned beef and vegetables. Mix one quart of sweet milk, two eggs, a cupful of currants, or chopped raisins (it is very good, however, without any fruit), a small cupful of brown sugar, half a teaspoonful of salt, one cupful of wheat flour, enough of corn-meal to form a thick batter, and two teaspoonfuls of baking powder. Pour it in a pudding-dish, and steam steadily for three hours.

Baked Corn-Meal Pudding.—Stir one cupful of corn-meal into a quart of boiling milk. Set it aside to be-

come partly cooled, and then add two eggs, four table spoonfuls of sugar, half a teaspoonful of salt, and either cinnamon or ginger, as preferred. Pour it into a buttered dish, turn over it half a cupful of cream or rich milk, allowing it to remain on top, and let it bake from thirty to forty minutes. It should be partly cooled before being served. A boiling-hot pudding or pie is a needless addition to human woes.

Christmas Pudding.—Mix three cupfuls of flour, one cupful of milk, one cupful of molasses, one cupful of raisins, three tablespoonfuls of finely chopped salt pork, one egg, half a teaspoonful of cinnamon, the same of nutmeg, and a pinch of cloves; add, lastly, two teaspoonfuls of baking powder, beat thoroughly together, pour it in a pudding dish, and let it steam for three hours.

Sauce for Christmas Pudding.—Make a smooth butter gravy, stir into it four tablespoonfuls of good brown sugar, and the juice of a lemon, letting it boil until clear.

Boiled Fruit Pudding.—Mix one cupful of sugar, two cupfuls of sweet milk, one egg, a little salt, half a nutmeg, two cupfuls of dried currants, chopped raisins, or sliced sweet apples, enough of flour for a stiff batter, and two teaspoonfuls of baking powder. Pour the batter into a buttered pail, or a floured pudding-cloth, and let it boil steadily for three hours in plenty of water.

Simple Bread Pudding.—Pour a quart of hot milk upon a pint of bread-crumbs that have been placed in a buttered dish; add two eggs, a dust of cinnamon or nutmeg, a little fruit, if liked, and bake it twenty minutes. Serve with cream and sugar.

Simple Bread Pudding, No. 2.—Dip slices of stale bread into hot water, and lay them in a buttered earthen dish. Into each slice, press a few fine raisins and sprinkle over a little cinnamon. Beat together two eggs and a

pint of milk, which pour over the bread, and bake in a moderate oven for twenty minutes.

Rice Pudding.—Make a custard of three cupfuls of new milk, the yolks of two eggs, and a tablespoonful of corn starch. Into this stir one cupful of boiled rice, four tablespoonfuls of sugar, a little salt, and a teaspoonful of orange or lemon extract. Pour into a pudding dish, and bake in a brisk oven fifteen minutes. Have the egg whites beaten, sweetened, and flavored; spread them over the pudding when it is done, and return it to the oven for an instant, until delicately browned. It is to be eaten with fruit, or with cream and sugar.

Rock Rice—A Pretty Holiday Dish.—Boil a large cupful of rice in one and a half pints of new milk, with a little salt. By keeping it closely covered it will cook evenly, and requires no stirring. Add more milk, if it is needed, before the rice is done. When it is thoroughly cooked, remove the cover, and let it become rather dry; then sweeten it with fine white sugar, flavor it with lemon, and pile it in a rough, rock-like shape in a glass dish. Beat the whites of three eggs to a stiff froth, add a little sugar, a few drops of lemon extract, and a tablespoonful of sweet cream. Pour this all over the rice, and turn a cupful of cream around the base.

Rice Bird's-Nest, for Holidays.—Boil rice as in the foregoing recipe, and put a part of it to mold in six or eight egg-cups, previously dipped in cold water. When cold slip the rice "eggs" out into a low round dish, and place the remainder of the rice around them to form the "nest," laying over it little strips of marmalade for "straws." Serve with sweet cream.

THE BEAUTIES OF CREAM.

With a little tin cream-whipper, costing but a few cents at the hardware stores, and plenty of cream and fresh fruit, the most delicious desserts can be made; and their

introduction upon farm-house tables, for a Sunday treat, or for little anniversary feasts, or company occasions, would be what Barry Gray would call "a good thing," in place of the richer and more unwholesome dishes of state-occasions.

A Fine Charlotte Russe.—Make a large thin sponge-cake, taking care to bake it in an even sheet about an inch thick. When done and cooled, cut out a piece to fit the bottom of a round dish four or five inches deep, and then cut regular pieces to fit around the sides. Into this pour a cream, prepared as follows: Whip one pint of sweet cream, flavored with orange or vanilla, to a stiff froth, and add to it the frothed whites of two eggs and a cupful of pulverized sugar. Stir all lightly together, pour it upon the cake until the dish is filled, and set it into the refrigerator, or upon ice with a pan turned over it, until the cream is stiffened.

A Simpler Charlotte Russe.—A simpler dessert of this sort is made by laying lady-fingers or squares of sponge-cake around the sides of a glass dish, filling it with whipped cream, and putting it in a cool place to harden.

Bavarian Cream (Mrs. Henderson).—Set a pint of cream upon ice until chilled, then whip it to a stiff froth. Boil a pint of rich milk, flavored with extract of vanilla; remove it from the fire and add half a box of "Cox's Sparkling Gelatine," that has soaked for an hour in a cupful of warm water at the back of the stove. When the milk is partly cooled, stir in the beaten yolks of four eggs. When cold and beginning to thicken, stir in the whipped cream lightly, put it in a mold, and set it on ice or in some cool place.

Whipped Cream with Fruits.—Whipped cream is palatable served with an kind of fresh fruit, turning the cream from a mold upon a handsome dish, and surrounding it with the fruit.

Cream Shells.—Bake nice little sponge cakes in gem irons until quickly and delicately done. When partly cool, open them at the sides, and put in a teaspoonful of whipped cream, flavored with orange or vanilla.

Cream Gravy for Toast and Vegetables.—For a family of six, pour one and a half pints of milk and one cupful of cream in a saucepan, with half a teaspoonful of salt. Mix a large tablespoonful of flour with three of cold milk, and stir into it the boiling milk; when thickened, remove it from the fire, and stir in the beaten yolk of an egg. This is very much liked by children as a “gravy” for baked and boiled potatoes, or when poured over slices of toasted bread. It is also a nice dressing for asparagus, green peas, and string beans.

A Substitute for Cream.—When cream is not plenty, a very passable substitute can be made by pouring a pint of hot milk upon the well-beaten yolks of two eggs, and adding a teaspoonful of white sugar.

PIES.

There has been a great outcry among food-reformers over “pie.” But there are pies and pies; and the latter sort are still worth perpetuating. There is that pie of the dark ages, a thin layer of spiced fruit between two sodden, greasy layers of “crust.” And there is the pie of the skilled cook of to-day, rich, juicy, self-flavored fruits, enclosed in a pastry as delicate and tender as congealed foam! Ah! sad the fate of such pie, when it finds itself alone with a knife and fork and a “crowned head!”

One important objection to pie-making, is that it requires a good deal of time, compared with other preparations of food; and a busy house-keeper had better rely on a good variety of puddings and fruit desserts, as a general thing, in place of these elaborations. But, if pies are made, let them be worth while—let them be good

forms of food, rather than laboriously concocted worriments to the digestive powers.

A Good Paste or "Crust."—Mix four cupfuls of sifted flour, one and one-half cupfuls of butter, the yolks of two eggs, and a little ice-water, or else water directly from the well. Beat the yolks, add a little cold water to them, and mix slowly with the flour until a smooth, firm dough is formed. Roll it out, taking pains to keep it in square shape. Have the butter as hard and firm as possible, and divide it into three equal parts. Spread one part over one half the paste, fold the other half over, and roll out to the same size as before; lay on the second portion of butter, fold and roll; then use the remaining butter in the same way. Have the fruit in readiness, and the oven at a brisk, but not scorching heat. Work rapidly and handle the dough as little as possible, setting a part of it near the ice until it is wanted. The secret of tender and "fluffy" paste is to have it as cold as possible, and the oven briskly hot when the pie is put in to bake. The best of butter should be used for this purpose. Poor butter cannot be used successfully in any branch of cookery.

Another Paste.—If it is warm weather, and one has no ice, this paste can be made. It will be found light and tender. First prepare the fruit, and have the oven heated. Mix a large teaspoonful of Royal Baking Powder in three pints of sifted flour. Into this rub one cupful of butter, and add enough of cold sweet milk to form the dough. Put it on the plates with as little handling as possible. If the fruit is very juicy, sprinkle a little flour over the bottom-crust before the fruit is put in, to prevent it becoming soaked and sodden.

Apple Pie, No. 1.—Slice nice tart apples, and make the pies with upper and under-crusts, merely putting a tablespoonful of water in each. When baked, remove the top-

crust, sprinkle over the apples half a cupful of sugar, a few bits of butter, and, if liked, a dust of cinnamon. Replace the crust, cover with a napkin, and serve, when partly cooled, with a white cream over each piece.

Apple Pie, No. 2.—Stew about a dozen pippins, or greenings, in a very little water. When soft, stir in a cupful of sugar, and a teaspoonful of butter. Prepare two pie-plates with an under-crust and rimmed edges, fill them with apples, and bake.

Custard Pie.—Use deep earthen plates, and line them with a rather thick paste. For one pie, beat two eggs and three tablespoonfuls of sugar together, add two coffee cupfuls of rich milk, and grate a little nutmeg over the top after it is poured in the paste. Remove it from the oven a minute or two before it is quite firm, as it will continue to thicken with its own heat, and three minutes over-cooking spoils it.

Cream Pie.—For one pie, use the yolks of two eggs, two cupfuls of sweet cream, and two tablespoonfuls of sugar, beaten thoroughly together. Bake it in an under-crust only.

Mock-Cream Pie.—Make a quart of corn-starch custard, stir into it a tablespoonful of butter, and a little vanilla or orange extract, and bake the same as Custard and Cream Pie.

Orange Pie.—Cream half a cupful of butter, with one of sugar; add the yolks of three eggs, and the juice and grated rind of a fine orange. Just before filling the paste, stir in the egg-whites beaten to a froth.

Lemon Pie.—Mix a tablespoonful of corn-starch smoothly with a little cold water, and pour into half a pint of boiling water, stirring it to prevent burning. Add a bit of nice butter, and a cupful of sugar. Remove from the fire, and when it is partly cooled stir into it a beaten egg, and the juice and rind of a lemon. Bake the same

as Custard and Cream Pie. Some cooks whisk and flavor the whites of three eggs, and spread them on the top when the pie is done, letting it remain in the oven a moment to brown.

Rhubarb Pie.—Have deep plates for this pie, and sprinkle the under-crust with a little flour before filling with fruit. Peel and cut the stalks into small bits, and fill the plates, first with a layer of fruit and then a layer of sugar, until they are well heaped up in the center. Sprinkle more flour over the top, and pinch the top crust well down over the edges, as the charm of this pie, aside from plenty of sugar, consists in its retainment of all its juice.

Pumpkin Pie.—This, like the celebrated little girl in the rhyme, can be “very good, indeed,” or it can be “horrid.” When I want to make the richest, creamiest, and altogether loveliest pumpkin pies, I use squash. But as squash pies are never celebrated in rhyme, or made to figure in country romances, I permit them to be called Pumpkin Pies. One can be sure of sweet fine-grained squashes always; while, on the other hand, even the best-intentioned pumpkins will sometimes prove stringy and flavorless.

Stew the squash in just enough water to prevent burning, and pass it through a colander. For each pie, beat together one egg, three tablespoonfuls of sweet cream, four tablespoonfuls of squash, half a cupful of light-brown sugar, a coffee-cupful of new milk, half a teaspoonful of mixed ginger and cinnamon, and a dust of nutmeg.

Have rather deep plates, lined with good, tender, but not too rich paste. Fill them to the depth of an inch, or a little more, and bake in a rather moderate oven until slightly browned.

If pumpkin is used, I would advise another egg to each pie, and less pumpkin,

Mince Pie.—Even a mince pie can be made that will not bring to one's slumbers painful visions of great grandmothers. Suet, and citron, and brandy, are all abominations, and really add nothing to the good flavor of the pie.

For one quart of finely chopped beef, use three quarts of finely chopped tart apples, two cupfuls of raisins, cut in halves, one cupful of currants, washed and dried, two teaspoonfuls of ground cinnamon, one teaspoonful of nutmeg, and a scant teaspoonful of cloves. If the meat was not salted when boiled, add one teaspoonful of salt. Place the chop in a preserving-kettle, or large earthen pan, upon the stove, and mix with it two cupfuls of good syrup, one cupful of either boiled cider, or currant or grape jelly, one cupful of brown sugar, and enough of water in which the beef was boiled to make the mixture sufficiently juicy. Let it scald up together, and it will be ready for filling the pies. Pastry recipe, No. 2, will be good to use on this occasion.

Hasty Pie.—For a good and easily prepared dessert, place any kind of fresh or canned fruit in the bottom of an earthen dish, to the depth of two inches. Beat together one egg, two tablespoonfuls of melted butter, a small cupful of sweet milk, a cupful of flour, and a teaspoonful of baking powder. Pour or spread this evenly over the fruit (which, to hasten matters, may set on the stove while the batter is being prepared), and bake until the crust is well done. It may be eaten with a pudding-sauce, or with milk and sugar.

CAKE.

Sponge Cake.—It is no easy matter to make perfect sponge cake, but on holidays or company occasions it is worth while to make it. It is not only delicious, but it is entirely wholesome, something which can not be said of all cake. Beat the whites and yolks of ten eggs sep-

arately for half an hour [the cook must have an assistant in this part of the formula], one and a half cupful of fine pulverized white sugar to be mixed with the yolks. Beat the yolks and whites lightly together, and stir in another cupful and a half of sugar, two and a half cupfuls of sifted flour, and the grated rind and half the juice of a good-sized lemon. Have ready a smooth, deep biscuit-pan, lined with white, buttered paper, and the oven moderately hot. Pour in the batter, and, if possible, do not move it after placing it in the oven until it is done. The heat may be increased after the first ten minutes. When removed from the oven, spread over it a thin icing flavored with a little extract of lemon.

Orange Cake.—Mix two cupfuls of sugar, two cupfuls of flour, one-half cupful of water, the yolks of five eggs, and the whites of three, a little salt, the juice and grated rind of an orange, and a teaspoonful of baking powder. Beat all thoroughly together, with the exception of the flour and baking powder, which add lastly. Bake this in four jelly-tins, and spread between the cakes an icing made of the whites of two eggs, the grated rind and a little juice of an orange, and enough of powdered white sugar to make it rather stiff.

Roll Jelly Cake.—This can be made and baked in a few minutes, and is sometimes eaten warm, with a pudding sauce, as a dessert for dinner. Beat four eggs with a teacupful of white sugar, a scant teacupful of sifted flour, a teaspoonful of vanilla or orange extract, and a teaspoonful of baking powder. Bake it in a thin, even sheet in a quick oven; turn it out, bottom side up, on a napkin; spread it with thick grape or currant jelly, and roll it, beginning at the end.

Corn-starch Cake.—This is very nice if not eaten later than twenty-four hours after it is baked. Cream one cupful of powdered white sugar, with half a cupful of

butter, and stir into it half a cupful of sweet milk and two-thirds of a cupful of corn-starch. Then add the well-beaten whites of five eggs, a teaspoonful of extract of rose, and a cupful of flour in which is mixed a large teaspoonful of baking powder. Bake rather gradually in a paper-lined cake-tin. A thin icing, flavored with a few drops of rose, may be spread on top. This delicate, snow-white cake looks nicely along with contrasting squares of golden sponge cake.

Lady Fingers.—Mix eight tablespoonfuls of powdered white sugar, four eggs—the yolks and whites beaten separately—six tablespoonfuls of flour, a little salt, and a teaspoonful of lemon, orange, or vanilla. Beat the batter for ten minutes; roll some rather stiff paper into a tunnel, and pour the batter through it upon buttered pans in long, slender little cakes. Dust a little sugar over them, and bake as quickly as possible without scorching.

Alum Gingerbread.—Put a bit of alum the size of a walnut in a cake-bowl, and pour upon it a cupful of boiling water. When nearly cool, add half a cupful of butter, two cupfuls of syrup, a tablespoonful of ginger, a large teaspoonful of soda, and enough flour for rolling.

Plain Gingerbread.—Mix one cupful of molasses, one of boiling water, a tablespoonful of butter, two teaspoonfuls of ginger, two cupfuls of flour, and a teaspoonful of soda. Pour the batter in a thick tin, and bake slowly.

Bread Cake.—Mix three cupfuls of light and sweet bread-sponge, one small cupful of butter, two cupfuls of light brown sugar, two eggs, one cupful of chopped raisins, a teaspoonful of nutmeg and cinnamon, and a coffee-cupful of flour, to which is added a large teaspoonful of baking powder. Let it stand near the stove for a quarter of an hour before placing it in the oven, and let it bake rather slowly.

Tea Cakes.—Beat three eggs with half a cupful of sweet cream, a pinch of salt, and half a teaspoonful of cinnamon. Add a teaspoonful of baking powder, and flour enough to roll out easily in a very thin sheet; cut in squares, fry in boiling lard, and sprinkle over a little fine, white sugar.

Doughnuts.—These will not absorb fat. They are made with two eggs, a scant cupful of sugar, a coffee-cupful of sweet milk, a little salt, half a nutmeg, two teaspoonfuls of baking powder, and just flour enough to roll out; avoid a stiff dough. Fry in boiling lard, in twists or rings.

Cream Cake.—Set upon the stove a saucepan containing a cupful of cream and a cupful of milk; when the milk boils, stir into it three teaspoonfuls of flour, mixed with the yolk of an egg, a teaspoonful of orange extract, a pinch of salt, and a little cold milk. Stir the milk until the flour is well cooked, and set it aside to cool. Make a batter after the recipe for Corn-starch Cake; bake it in four or five jelly-tins, and spread the above cream between.

Christmas Cookies.—Mix one cupful of white sugar and half a cupful of butter creamed together; one cupful of sweet milk, one teaspoonful extract of rose, and one teaspoonful of baking powder. When flour is added, and the dough rolled out in a thin sheet, sprinkle all over it some granulated sugar (a flour-dredge should be used); cut out the cookies, and bake them without browning. If the sugar is properly coarse, they will sparkle like frost-work.

HOME-MADE CANDIES, ETC.

Cream Candy.—Place a large cupful of white sugar in a porcelain or granitized kettle, with three tablespoonfuls of water, and let it dissolve at the back of the stove; then

set it forward, and let it boil until it will crisp in water. Stir in a teaspoonful of rose or vanilla extract, and half a teaspoonful of cream-of-tartar. Pour it into a buttered pan or platter, and when cool, work it until it is perfectly white; cut it in little squares, and set it away to dry.

Horehound Candy.—Dissolve one pound of white sugar in half a pint of water, and boil until it threads or crisps. Flavor it with extract of horehound, pour it into buttered pans, and finish like Cream Candy.

Molasses Candy.—Mix one pint of molasses, a small cupful of white sugar, a tablespoonful of vinegar, and a lump of butter the size of a walnut. If flavored with ginger or horehound, it is good for children's coughs. Boil, and finish the same as the above.

Peppermint Drops.—A cupful of white sugar and two tablespoonfuls of water should be boiled briskly, stirring it all the while, until it is nearly ready to grain, when add a small teaspoonful of essence of peppermint; boil a moment longer, and drop it in little pats on buttered white paper.

Crystalized Pop-corn and Nuts.—Boil one cupful of white sugar with three tablespoonfuls of water, and one of butter, until it shows threads when dropped from the spoon. Then pour in three quarts of freshly-made pop-corn; stir until the sugar is thoroughly distributed, and then set it away to cool. Nut-meats can be used in place of pop-corn, and will be found delicious.—From "Golden Rule."

Pop-corn Balls.—Grind rather finely two quarts of popped corn, and stir it into a boiling syrup made of a cupful of white sugar and three tablespoonfuls of water. When partly cooled, form into balls, and roll them in pulverized sugar.

SOUPS.

Soup is another form of food rarely seen on farm-house tables, partly because of the distance from butchers' stalls, and partly because the people have a vague idea that it is "sloppy" and of no account. Doubtless many a farmer would turn away from a bowl of delicious broth, but would cheerfully tackle the joint or the fowl that made the broth, and gave up the greater part of its best qualities to it.

In boiling meat, the farm-wife often throws out most of its nutriment to the pigs or into the slop-drain, and triumphantly carries to the dining-room the impoverished joint now despoiled of half its worth.

Let these people think twice about this matter.

Various kinds of palatable and nutritious soups can be made without any meat whatever, although nearly all soups are improved by the addition of a little "stock," as the water in which fresh meats have been boiled is called. Nearly all children like soup, and with good bread and fruit it is far healthier for them than fried or fat meats, with the too common accompaniments of pie and cake.

Green-corn Soup.—Take about ten fine, tender ears of sweet-corn; grate them, not too closely to the cob, and scald up cobs and corn together in a quart of boiling, salted water. This secures the milk that otherwise would remain in the cobs. After ten minutes, remove the cobs, and pour in a quart of new milk; season with salt and butter and a little pepper, and let it cook gently for ten minutes more.

Pea Soup.—In the morning, put a pint of split peas in two quarts of water, and let them stew about four hours, or until soft; then throw in these vegetables, cut in small pieces: Two carrots, two parsnips, half a rutabaga, a small onion, and three potatoes, adding water

enough to make good the quantity that has evaporated during the four hours. Let the soup boil for half an hour, then strain it through a colander, mashing the peas and vegetables through with a spoon. Season it with salt and pepper, and add a cupful of sweet cream just before carrying it to the table.

Bean Soup.—Put a pint of beans, with a shin or a pound of lean beef, in a kettle with cold water, and let them stew gently all the forenoon. An onion can be added if it is liked. At noon, remove the meat, mash the beans if they are not already pulpy, add enough water to make two quarts of soup, season with salt and a little pepper, and pour it in a tureen upon slices of toasted brown bread.

Potato Soup.—Thinly slice four or five nice potatoes; pour upon them a pint and a half of boiling water. After stewing ten minutes they will be soft. Then add a pint of rich milk, salt, pepper, a bit of butter, and two tablespoonfuls of rolled crackers. Let it boil up, and serve.

Vegetable Oyster, or Salsify Soup.—Make the same as Potato Soup, and serve with little crackers and mixed pickles.

Tomato Soup.—Peel and slice ten ripe tomatoes; boil them three-quarters of an hour; add three tablespoonfuls of rolled cracker or fine bread crumbs, a bit of soda the size of a bean, half a cupful of butter; salt, pepper, and a quart of rich milk. Let it simmer for ten minutes.

Mutton Broth.—Remove the fat from a quart of water in which a leg of mutton or lamb has been boiled, and add two cupfuls of clear water, a handful of rice, a stalk of celery, and an onion cut in halves. Simmer half an hour, remove vegetables, and serve.

Chicken Soup.—Cut up two chickens, or one good-sized fowl, and place in a kettle with a pound of veal and three pints of water. Boil gently for two hours.

Take the kettle to the kitchen table, and remove the fat from the top ; strain the soup through a colander, and add to it half a cupful of rice and a little parsley. Let it simmer for half an hour, adding water to replace what may have boiled away ; season with salt and a little white pepper, and just before it is served, pour in a cupful of sweet cream. The chickens can be used for a salad.

Palatable Soup for a Sick Person.—Cut a pound of lean beef or mutton in small bits, and put it in a sauce-pan with three pints of cold water ; cover it, not too closely ; let it come to simmering heat, and remain cooking until the water is reduced to little more than a pint. Toast a slice of bread slowly, until it is browned clear through, but not at all burned ; put it in the sauce-pan with the meat, and let it remain ten minutes ; then strain the soup, and season it with salt and a very little Cayenne pepper.

Veal Soup.—Put one onion, half a cupful of rice or pearl barley, and a knuckle of veal, with the bones broken, in two quarts of cold water, to simmer slowly for two hours and a half. At the end of that time, beat the yolks of two eggs in half a pint of cream, with a teaspoonful of salt and a little Cayenne pepper. Pour this into the soup ; let it boil up once, then pour it through a colander into a tureen, and serve.

Plain Beef Soup.—This soup requires longer time than any other. Six hours or more of gentle simmering (and soup-meats should never be boiled in any other way) will do it no harm. Put a good beef shin, or three pounds off the neck, in a gallon of cold water, and when it comes to a boil, set the kettle at the back of the stove where it will cook very moderately through the forenoon. About forty minutes before it is wanted, add six potatoes, one turnip, two carrots, and an onion, cut in small pieces. Just before serving, mix two tablespoonfuls of flour very

smoothly in a little cold water, with a teaspoonful of salt and some pepper, and stir it into the soup, letting it boil two or three minutes longer. The meat should be placed on a platter, in this instance, and the soup and vegetables poured into a tureen.

Oyster Soup.—Put the oysters, with their own liquor, in the soup kettle, with butter, salt, and pepper in proportion with the quantity of soup to be made. When they begin to bubble, pour boiling milk and water over them, and let the soup simmer for ten minutes.

Seasonings for Soups.—The best kind of pepper to use for soups, or nearly everything else in which pepper is used, is pure Cayenne, which is a tonic in itself; and next to Cayenne, the white pepper, which even a country house-keeper can obtain if she will keep it in her mind when she does her next town shopping. It is rarely sold in country stores. Celery-salt is another excellent item to remember; while parsley, onions, and salsify can be kept always at hand.

SALADS.

Salads are appetizing, wholesome, and refreshing. Besides, they cost next to nothing. But are they not almost as rare in the country as Bavarian creams and soups?

Simple salads can be made by every one. If of vegetables, they should always be placed on the table freshly made; and it takes but an extra minute to arrange them in pretty form.

Plain Dressing for Salads.—Beat the yolks of three eggs with five tablespoonfuls of good vinegar, a tablespoonful of sugar, and a teaspoonful of mixed mustard. Add a little salt, a bit of butter, or, if liked, a tablespoonful of olive oil, and stir all together in a saucepan over the fire, until a smooth dressing is formed of the consis-

tency of cream. This is good with chopped cabbage, fresh lettuce, and various kinds of salad.

French Salad Dressing.—Mix a saltspoonful of salt with one of pepper; add a teaspoonful of grated onion, three tablespoonfuls of olive oil, and two of vinegar. When well mixed put in the salad, and stir well together.

Lettuce Salads.—Choose tender little heads, and lay small radishes or nasturtium blossoms around them. Plain dressing.

2. Lettuce and young onions, cut finely, and mixed with plain salad dressing will be generally liked.

3. A pretty salad is made by laying slices of cold boiled beets around the edge of a dish, and filling the center with fresh lettuce heads.

4. Another variation is a dish of lettuce, with hard-boiled eggs sliced and laid over the top.

Cabbage Salad, No. 1.—Place a saucepan on the stove containing one cupful of good vinegar, half a cupful of white sugar, a bit of butter, a teaspoonful of salt, and a teaspoonful of mixed mustard. When it boils up, pour it over five cupfuls of chopped cabbage.

Cabbage Salad, No. 2.—Mix chopped cabbage, lettuce, pepper-grass, and a small onion together, sprinkle with sugar and salt, place in a broad bowl or salad-dish, lay sliced eggs on the top, and pour over a cupful of vinegar.

Raw cabbage, chopped fine and agreeably seasoned, is an appetizing and healthful relish; but when cooked, and especially when boiled along with fat meats, it is quite the reverse, and the human stomach should not often be burdened with it.

Potato Salad.—Mix thinly-sliced cold, boiled potatoes and young onions, sometimes adding a little chopped parsley, and pour over them a French Salad dressing.

Ham Salad.—Mix cold, boiled ham with hard-boiled

eggs, in the proportion of about half and half. Pour over it a plain salad dressing, and place around the edges fresh lettuce or leaves of parsley.

Spinach, No. 1.—Boil the spinach twenty minutes, drain off the water and chop finely with a knife. Return the kettle or saucepan to the fire, with a little butter and salt, and let it remain, without scorching, until it is quite dry. Dip a deep dish, a bowl will answer, in cold water, press the spinach into it, and then turn it out upon a plate, and place sliced eggs over and around it.

Spinach, No. 2.—After boiling, chopping, and seasoning the spinach, as above, remove the saucepan to the kitchen-table, and stir into it a dressing made of one cupful of cream, yolks of two eggs, a little pepper, and half a teaspoonful of mixed mustard.

Spinach is very good with nearly all kinds of meat, and is particularly good with boiled ham and corned beef.

Chicken Salad.—Cut the meat neatly from two tender roasted chickens, and chop with a bunch of celery and some sprigs of parsley. Sprinkle over salt, a little white or Cayenne pepper, and half a cupful of vinegar and oil. Let this stand two or three hours, then place it on a plate or salad dish in the midst of fresh lettuce or parsley leaves, and pour over it a salad-dressing.

FISH.

Baked Fish.—A good-sized fish of any sort is especially fine when baked. Cut the fish open from head to tail; clean and wipe it dry; fill it with a stuffing made of chopped bread, seasoned with butter, pepper, salt, and two teaspoonfuls of powdered sage; wind it with twine; lay it in a baking-pan on a grate or tin, to keep it from touching the water, and pour salted water into the pan with which to baste it. The oven must be hot enough at first to crisp the fish; afterward it may bake more moderately

from half to three-quarters of an hour, according to the size. Serve it with a butter-gravy, to which is sometimes added two tablespoonfuls of chopped boiled eggs.

Boiled Fish.—If one lives in the vicinity of the sea, lakes, or streams, where fine fish abound, a “fish-kettle” should be added to one’s kitchen supplies. They are of oval shape, and have strainers fitting the inside, in which a fish can be boiled or fried (immersed in boiling lard) without being broken in the least. A passable substitute, in boiling fish, is to lay it in a circle upon a plate, and tie the plate in a napkin, by which it can be lifted out without breaking the fish.

Fresh-water fish are improved by being soaked for a while in cold salted water, and being boiled with a bag containing sliced carrots, an onion, a little celery, and some cloves and peppers. Some cooks add half a cupful of vinegar to the water.

Fried Fish.—Wipe the fish, brush it over with the white of an egg, roll it in grated crackers, corn-meal, or fine bread-crumbs, and lay it in a kettle of boiling lard. The lard must be hot enough to immediately crisp the fish, and deep enough to float it. None of the fat will be absorbed, and the fish will come out beautifully browned, and well done in every way. If care is taken not to scorch the lard, it can be used for several fish-days. This manner of cooking is far superior to the commoner frying-pan method.

Broiled Fish.—A double wire broiler is best for fish, as it can be turned without disturbing it. A large fish should be split, or have gashes cut across its sides. The coals should be clear and hot, and the broiler turned in time to prevent all burning. (The fish may first be rubbed inside with salt, and sprinkled with a little lemon-juice). Have a warm platter ready, with a bit of butter, and some salt and pepper in the bottom of it. As soon

as the fish is done, lay it upon the platter, sprinkle over it some salt, and a few bits of butter, and set in the oven until the butter is melted.

Boiled Fresh Cod.—Cut it in slices, and boil it in salted water, in which is a cupful of vinegar, and half a cupful of grated horse-radish. Serve with drawn butter, or with an oyster sauce.

Codfish Cakes.—Mix one cupful of boiled and mashed salt codfish with three cupfuls of mashed potatoes, a small chopped onion, the yolks of two eggs, and a large tablespoonful of flour. Form into small cakes, and brown them on a griddle, or drop them into boiling lard.

Codfish and Cream.—Pick the codfish into small feathery bits, removing all particles of bone, and let it soak in cold water for two hours. If for breakfast, it can stand all night. Drain off the water, pour over the fish a pint and a half of new milk, and set the saucepan at the back of the stove, where it may slowly arrive to simmering heat. After it has gently cooked for ten minutes, add to it a tablespoonful of flour mixed smoothly in half a cupful of sweet cream, and let it boil up for a moment. Then remove it from the stove, stir into it the beaten yolks of two eggs, and it is ready to dish.

Broiled Salt Cod.—Soak nice white strips of the fish for several hours, in cold water, dry them with a cloth, and lay them over clear hot coals on a broiler that has been rubbed with suet. Brown the fish nicely on both sides, remove it to a warm platter, and lay upon each piece a little fresh butter. A fringe of fried potatoes is a good accompaniment.

Scalloped Oysters.—Put two quarts of oysters in a colander to drain. Roll a dozen crackers fine, or grate half a loaf of stale bread. Butter a deep earthen dish, and fill it with alternate layers of oysters and crumbs, seasoning the oysters with salt, pepper, and butter, and leaving

bread crumbs on top. Pour over the oyster liquor, and half a cupful of cream or new milk. Bake half an hour.

Fried Oysters.—Sprinkle pepper and salt over two dozen large oysters, and set them in a cool place for twenty minutes. Have ready beaten eggs, rolled crackers, and a kettle of boiling lard. Roll the oysters first in crumbs, then in the egg, then in crumbs again [this makes an adhesive coating], and drop them into the boiling lard. When well browned, remove them with a skimmer, letting them drain a moment, and carry them to the table on a warm platter.

Roasted Canned Oysters.—These are very “comforting,” in winter, after a long sleigh-ride, or on coming home chilled—and, as a general thing, hungry—from a concert or lecture. They can be cooked on the dining-room coals, and a plate of crackers and a pint of bottled cider, gently warmed before the fire, form an accompaniment that gives no one any trouble.

Make an opening in the end of the can, put in salt and pepper, bend the tin back into place, and set the can upon the coals. When it has bubbled over for two or three minutes, the oysters are done, and can be emptied out upon a hot platter, and have a little lemon juice sprinkled over them. If well roasted, they will be found delicious.

Stewed Oysters.—Have ready a quart of boiling milk. Scald one quart of oysters in their own liquor, skim them, season with salt, pepper, and butter, put them in a tureen, and pour milk over.

A FEW GOOD SAUCES FOR FISH AND MEATS.

Horse Radish Sauce, for Roast Beef and Beefsteaks.—Mix half a cupful of grated horse-radish, the same of grated cracker, one cupful of cream, and a little salt and pepper. Simmer together for twelve minutes.

Sauce for Broiled Meats and Fish.—Mix together a little chopped parsley, the juice of half a lemon, three tablespoonfuls of butter, and some pepper and salt. Pour it over steaks while they are hot, and place in the oven for a moment.

Mint Sauce for Roast Lamb.—Put one cupful of vinegar, two tablespoonfuls of sugar, and four of chopped mint in the gravy-boat, and let it stand two hours before it is used.

Oyster Sauce for Roast Turkey.—Boil up two dozen small oysters in a pint of drawn butter.

Drawn Butter.—Put two tablespoonfuls of butter in a saucepan, and when it has melted, sprinkle in a tablespoonful of flour, and stir it, without browning, until it is well cooked; then slowly add boiling water until it is of the right consistency. Pour it through a gravy-strainer, and add a little salt and another tablespoonful of butter. This is the basis for a variety of sauces, and should always be made with care. Scorched or lumpy drawn butter may not materially shorten life, but it is an evidence of either carelessness or ignorance, or of “too many irons in the fire” on the part of the cook.

Boiled Egg Sauce for Baked and Boiled Fish.—Add to half a pint of drawn butter, three hard-boiled eggs cut in small pieces.

Parsley Sauce for Boiled Fish or Fowl.—Add two tablespoonfuls of chopped parsley to half a pint of hot drawn butter.

Holland Sauce for Boiled Fish, Cabbage, Asparagus, and Cauliflower.—Stir into half a pint of hot drawn butter, the beaten yolks of three eggs, and a little lemon-juice and Cayenne pepper.

Brown Sauce for Cutlets, Steaks, and Potted Meats.—Put a small chopped onion and a tablespoonful of butter in a saucepan over the fire. Brown, but do not scorch

it ; stir in a tablespoonful of flour, and then add a pint of stock. Let it boil for three minutes, and then strain it into the gravy-boat.

Roast Beef Gravy.—When a sauce or gravy is made from the drippings of a roast of beef, be careful to remove all the fat, thicken, not too thick, with a little flour mixed smoothly with cold water, and pour it through a gravy strainer.

Tomato Sauce for Mutton Chops.—Mix half a can of tomatoes, a little Cayenne pepper, a sliced onion, and some salt. Stew slowly for half an hour ; strain, and add one tablespoonful of butter and two of vinegar.

Cold Sauce for Cold Roast Beef.—Mix one tablespoonful of grated horse-radish, one of sugar, two of vinegar, and four of sweet cream. This is sometimes relished with hot steaks.

Currant Jelly Sauce for Roast Venison.—Mix half a lemon peel, one tablespoonful of sugar, a teaspoonful of cinnamon, and a few cloves, six or eight, pounded together, and a cupful of water. Simmer for half an hour, and add a glassful of currant jelly. When the latter is melted, strain the sauce into a gravy-boat or bowl.

BEEF, MUTTON, FOWLS, ETC.

Roasting is the best method of cooking nearly all meats, but as very few country kitchens have conveniences for roasting, the next best method is baking, and when the meat is well basted, and removed from the oven at the right time, it is almost as good as when roasted. Twelve minutes to the pound is a very good rule for baking beef.

Roast Beef.—If it is a rib-roast, remove the bones so that it can be rolled compactly together, and kept so by a piece of twine. Dredge the meat all over with flour in

which salt and pepper has been mixed ; place it in the dripping pan, raised from the bottom by a grate or tin, and put it in a brisk oven. After a quarter of an hour, or when the meat is crisped on all sides, pour a pint of salted water in the pan, and baste it often.

Corned Beef.—Allow half an hour to each pound of beef. Boil it very gently, the cooking process is not at all hastened by a furious fire, and if it is to be eaten cold, set it off, and let it remain in the water until partly cooled ; then place it in an earthen dish, lay a plate over it, and press it with a three-pound weight.

Stuffed Beefsteak.—Even the toughest beef becomes good when served in this way : Take a round steak, and spread it an inch thick with a stuffing made of chopped bread and butter, seasoned with salt, pepper, and sage. A little onion may be added, if liked. Roll the steak up, tie it with twine, lay it in a pan with a few thin slices of salt pork on top, pour around it a pint of water, cover closely, and bake it in a moderate oven for three hours.

Roast Lamb.—Rub it with salt and pepper ; place it in a brisk oven, and baste it frequently until it is done. Ten minutes to each pound is about the time required.

Potted Beef.—Put the beef in a kettle, with some little slices of salt pork at the bottom ; sprinkle with salt and a little Cayenne paper, pour over two tablespoonfuls of vinegar, and set the kettle over the fire, covering it closely. When it has fried a little at the bottom, turn the meat, and in ten minutes add half a pint of water. Do not let the meat boil dry, but add a little water occasionally, letting it cook slowly, and keeping it closely covered.

Roast Pork.—Allow twenty minutes in the oven to every pound of pork. A stuffing made of bread and butter, and seasoned with salt, pepper, and sweet herbs, is

an improvement to all pork roasts, and apple sauce and cabbage salad should be served with them.

Good form for Cold Meats.—Remnants of boils and roasts are very good if chopped with twice their quantity of bread, seasoned with salt, pepper, and herbs, moistened with eggs and a little melted butter, and either baked in a loaf, or in small cakes on a griddle.

Boiled Ham.—A neat and relishable dish for a company tea is a platter of nicely sliced boiled ham, with the fat mostly trimmed off, and a slice of lemon placed on each slice of meat.

Dried Beef and Cream.—This is a delicious breakfast or supper dish. Put thin shavings of dried beef in a saucepan, with a pint of cold water, and let it slowly come to simmering heat and cook for ten minutes; then drain away the water and add a small lump of fresh butter; when it is bubbling hot, and fries a little, pour in one cupful of milk and one cupful of cream. When it has simmered awhile in the milk, add two teaspoonfuls of flour, mixed with a little cold milk, and let it boil up for a moment, after which remove it from the stove. Stir in the yolk of an egg, and pour it into a warmed tureen.

Boiled Leg of Mutton.—Wash the leg and put it into a kettle containing enough boiling water to cover it, and let it simmer gently without stopping for two hours and a quarter—if of large size. At the end of the first hour throw in a tablespoonful of salt. Let the mutton remain in the water, after it is removed from the stove, until nearly cold—in this way it takes back some of its juices; then drain and dry it with a cloth, and set it in a cool place. Tomato sauce should accompany it to the table.

Salt Pork, No. 1.—Cut the pork in thin slices and let them soak in cold water for an hour or two; drain, broil them in a frying-pan until slightly crisp, and place them in a tureen. Turn out nearly all the fat in the frying-

pan (it can be used for frying fish), and make a gravy of a pint of milk and a tablespoonful of flour, which pour over the meat in the tureen.

Salt Pork, No. 2.—Boil four or five pounds of pork having “streaks of lean” in it, in plenty of water for an hour and a half. Take it out, remove the skin, cut gashes across the top, sprinkle over a little powdered sage, pepper, and rolled crackers, and set it in the oven until browned a little. It is to be eaten cold.

Roast Turkey.—The perfection of this bird depends first upon its age and condition, and next upon its being frequently basted and thoroughly cooked. From two and a half to three hours should be allowed for a common-sized turkey; a large one requires from three and a half to four hours. In cool weather, or if one has a refrigerator, the fowl should be prepared for the oven the day before it is to be roasted. Fill it with a stuffing made of a loaf of soaked white bread, a small cupful of chopped salt pork, a minced onion, a tablespoonful of powdered summer-savory, a little pepper, and two raw eggs. Before placing it in the oven, lay thin slices of salt pork on top, baste it with salted water, and sprinkle over it flour and pepper. See that its wings and legs are tied closely to the body in good shape. Let it rest upon a tin or grate, so as not to be stewed in the water that must be poured in the baking pan. Baste it half a dozen times an hour, at least. It can be served with Oyster Sauce, or with a gravy made from the drippings, after the turkey is removed from the oven. In the latter case, the liver and heart of the fowl should be boiled, chopped finely, and added to the gravy, after it is strained. Cranberries, stewed in a little water, sweetened, and partly frozen in a mold, are good with turkey; so also is plum marmalade.

Fried Chickens.—Chickens are admirable when, after

being cut up and boiled in salted water for half an hour, they are fried in a pan, with a little salt pork, until nicely browned, placed in a tureen, and a gravy made of milk and cream, and a little flour poured over them.

Roasted Quails.—Place the birds in a baking-pan, with half an inch of boiling water slightly salted. Lay a thin slice of bacon or of salt pork over each breast; cover the pan closely, and set it in the oven for a quarter of an hour to steam and “plump” the birds. Then remove the cover and bake three-quarters of an hour, basting them often.

Roast Goose.—Do not attempt to roast any but a young goose. Make for it a stuffing of bread and butter, seasoned with chopped onions, sage, salt, and pepper, and moistened with an egg or two. Like turkey, it must be basted often and well cooked. From two to two hours and a half is a sufficient time. Apple sauce should accompany roast goose.

Stewed Pigeons.—Place a bit of salt pork in each, and lay them breast upward in a stew-pan along with a carrot, an onion, and a little parsley, and pour over enough boiling water to cover them. Cover closely and let them simmer until tender. Place them on pieces of toasted bread; remove the vegetables from the broth, thicken it with a little flour and water, adding a little pepper and salt, and pour it over the pigeons.

Pressed Veal.—Boil a loin of veal in as little water as possible. When done and cooled, chop it rather finely, seasoning it with salt, pepper, and sage, and pour over it a pint of the water in which it was boiled. Put it in a deep, oval dish, lay a platter on top, and press it with a weight.

Calf's Liver.—Fry thin slices of salt pork until crisp; lay them upon a platter and keep warm. Dip thin slices

of liver in boiling water, dredge them with flour, and fry them in the pork fat, turning them often until done, when place on the platter with the pork, and serve with a lettuce or spinach salad. This dish is improved for some tastes if an onion is sliced and browned with the pork.

Baked Beans with Pork.—Beans are much more palatable and much more nutritious when they are not saturated with the fat of pork or any other “grease.” Any one who tries this recipe will recognize the superiority of the dish to the usual method of preparing it. If the beans are more than a year old, let them soak over night and scald them in the morning in water containing half a teaspoonful of soda. (If they are of the year’s harvest, twenty minutes gentle parboiling in soda water will answer.) Then put them into clear water with a leanish piece of salt pork, neatly cleaned of brine, and gashed in slices across the top, half way to the bottom. After boiling slowly for an hour, or a less time if the beans become tender, skim them from the water into an earthen dish, leaving the meat to continue cooking in the kettle. Pour upon them three tablespoonfuls of syrup, a small cupful of clear hot water, and sprinkle over them a little Cayenne pepper and salt; if it is a small mess the meat will have salted sufficiently. Set them in a moderately hot oven to bake from half to three-quarters of an hour. An onion sliced over the top and removed when they are done, improves the flavor for many. Take the pork from the kettle when it is sufficiently cooked, and set it in the oven until it is crisped a little.

Cranberry or Wren’s Egg beans are very nice, cooked and seasoned in the above way, without any pork, but with an addition of plenty of salt, pepper, and an ounce of butter.

VEGETABLES.

It is proverbial that only one cook in a thousand knows how to cook a potato. In nine cases out of ten the best portion of this vegetable is thrown away in thick parings, and in ninety-nine times out of a hundred they are boiled instead of steamed. Thus this common viand has slim chances, in many kitchens, of reaching the table in its perfection. None but old potatoes should be pared at all ; and even old potatoes, if they have just a strip taken off the longest way around them, to facilitate the process of peeling, will prove better for having had their jackets mostly left on. Potatoes buried in earth or powdered charcoal never become old, and by using good methods of cooking, excellent preparations of this largely eaten vegetable may always be had.

Steamed Potatoes.—Thinly pare and cut in halves as many potatoes as are wanted. Lay them in ice-water for ten minutes. Have a close-covered steamer ready upon a kettle containing plenty of boiling water ; place the potatoes in it, and they will, if steadily steamed, be done in half an hour. Then set the steamer off to the back of the stove and open the cover slightly, that all moisture may evaporate.

When a pudding or a loaf of corn-bread is being steamed, the potatoes can be put in at their proper time around the pudding or bread dish, and so two birds secured with one stone.

Boiled Potatoes.—If one prefers to pare the potatoes, let the paring be as thin as possible, and put them in a kettle with enough of cold salted water to cover them. When they are done, pour off nearly all the water, set the kettle at the back of the stove, keeping it closely covered, and let them steam until dry and flaky.

Potato Snow.—For a handsome dish, and one that is

also delicious, press a dozen hot nicely-boiled "Snowflake" potatoes through a wire sieve into a vegetable dish previously warmed, and carry to the table immediately. A bowl of hot cream, seasoned with salt and a little white pepper, should accompany it.

Breakfast Potatoes.—Place a pint of new milk, a tablespoonful of butter, and half a teaspoonful of salt, in a saucepan. When it boils stir in a tablespoonful of flour mixed with a little cold milk. As it boils up again pour in a quart of sliced, cold, boiled potatoes, and set the saucepan on the back of the range or stove, where the potatoes may be thoroughly warmed without any scorching of the milk.

Baked Potatoes.—The charm of a baked potato consists in its being served at exactly the right stage of "doneness." A few minutes waiting detracts much from its good qualities. So something depends upon those who come to dinner as well as on those who prepare it. Baked potatoes are very comfortable for winter suppers, with cream gravy.

Ruta-baga Turnips.—Pare, slice thinly, and either steam them or boil them in salted boiling water. When done, drain away the water, dry out the moisture, mash finely, and season with plenty of butter, salt, white pepper, and a little white sugar.

Cauliflower.—Have salted boiling water ready; cut away all outer leaves, and put the cauliflower in the kettle. In a short time it will have cooked enough. Remove it to a vegetable dish, being careful to keep it unbroken, and pour over it a pint of milk and cream seasoned with salt and pepper, and thickened slightly with flour.

Parsnips.—When boiled and seasoned with salt, butter, and pepper, for one dinner; prepare enough, so that a part can be reserved for next day's fritters.

Parsnip Fritters.—To half a dozen boiled, mashed parsnips, add two tablespoonfuls of flour, two eggs, and a little pepper and salt. Form into little cakes, and brown them in a little suet in a frying-pan.

Egg Plant.—Cut this vegetable into slices about half an inch thick, which dip in salted beaten eggs and rolled crackers, alternately, and fry until richly browned in hot lard or suet. Serve on a warm plate.

A Nice Variation of Sweet Corn.—Grate the corn from a dozen fresh, tender ears; season it with salt and pepper, and cook it with an ounce of butter in a frying-pan, being careful that it gets no scorching.

Boiled Onions.—Peel them with the hands under water, and no "idle tears" will accompany the process. Put them in boiling salted water, and let them cook until nearly done, when pour away the water, and replace it with a cupful of rich milk and some salt and pepper, letting them simmer until tender.

Boiled Winter Squash.—Remove the seeds, and place it without paring in a steamer, with the rind uppermost. When tender, scrape the squash from the rind, mash smoothly, and season with salt, butter, and a little sugar.

Squash Fritters.—Mix cold boiled or baked winter squash with an egg, salt, pepper, and a little flour; form into little cakes, dredge them with flour, and brown them nicely on both sides in a frying-pan containing a little suet or lard, and pile them on a warm plate, with bits of butter between.

Celery.—After cutting away the roots, remove the outer tough stalks, wash thoroughly, and place it in cold water until wanted for the table. Women having the care of large households should eat freely of this savory esculent, for it gives strength to the nerves, and brings sound and healthful repose at night. It has also been announced lately as a remedy for rheumatism. Ordinarily, it is

dipped in salt, and eaten as we eat radishes ; but as a cure for rheumatic twinges, it must be steeped in water, and the water, seasoned with salt and pepper, may be drank either warm or cold.

CHAPTER XI.

A FEW SIMPLE LUXURIES.

AN ICE HOUSE.

Select or make a level space of ground near the house, where least exposed to the summer sun, and cover it with any kind of cheap boarding—odds and ends answering just as well as selected lumber ; leave spaces between the boards for drainage. Place stout posts at each corner, the two at the front being two feet higher than those at the back, to support the slanting roof. Nail rough boards all round to the hight of two and a half feet, and then nail similar ones on the inside ; fill up this space on all sides with sawdust or tan-bark, and cover the floor to the depth of ten inches with the same. Select a freezing day, when the ice is in its best condition for storing this summer luxury. Have the ice cut in as large squares as can be handled, and pack it as closely and evenly as possible, filling up all gaps with pounded ice, and turning water over each layer. Nail on more boards when the space is filled, and put in more layers of ice until enough is stored for a summer's use ; then cover the top two feet deep with the tan or sawdust, and build over it a roof of

boards covered with slabs. When ice is removed from it, care must be taken to replace the covering as completely as possible. Of course, a more elegant receptacle can be built if a farmer has time and money to devote to it ; but if completely built and shaded by trees or graceful vines, even this arrangement will not be an eye-sore, especially when dog-days shall have arrived !

A HOME-MADE REFRIGERATOR.

A good refrigerator from the shops costs anywhere from \$18 to \$50, according to the size and finish. Every house-keeper may not be able to possess one, and so it is worth while to see what can be done in the way of a decent substitute : Secure two dry-goods boxes, the more substantial the better, one of them to be three or four inches smaller than the other on all sides, and fix the tops to open on hinges of iron, or stout leather. The larger the boxes, of course, the more convenience and comfort is afforded. Place an inch or two of sawdust over the bottom of the larger box, and set the smaller one into it. Bore three-quarter-inch holes through both boxes at either end, near the top, and insert a roll of stiff pasteboard in each to act as ventilators. Then fill in all the space between the boxes with sawdust. Put in shelves at either end, leaving space in the center for the large deep pan or pail that is to hold the ice. There can also be two or three pegs, on which to hang pails of milk or fruit. A large tin pail, with a thin round board at the bottom to prevent its being bruised, would be the most convenient thing for holding the ice. Such a refrigerator, placed in the pantry, or some cool room, and covered in the hottest days with a folded blanket over the top, which is not protected with sawdust, would keep ice for twenty-four hours ; and in half a dozen such days, pay for its

slight cost many times over in the amount of food it would help to preserve.

A WATER FILTER.

Serious sicknesses would often be averted from the household if, among other sanitary regulations, none but filtered water was drank by its members. Water may look and taste like the purest, and still contain disease-germs that we would retreat from in horror if they but presented themselves duly labelled. Wells, cisterns, and springs that occupy ground lower than that of drains, vaults, or barn-yards, within a hundred feet or more, should be regarded with suspicion, no matter how "splendid" the water may appear.

A good and efficient filter can be made in this way: Take a cask, remove one end and set it upright, the open end at the top. At one third of the distance from the bottom place a round partition, pierced with small holes. On this arrange a layer of clean, small pebbles, and over them a layer of charcoal and another of sand, topping it with more pebbles. Over this put another partition with holes in it, or a layer of good-sized stones, to prevent the pebbles from being disturbed when water is poured in. A faucet is to be placed in the bottom to draw off the water. A pail of water and a lump of ice, placed in the top of the cask and closely covered, supplies the perfection of drinking water for twenty-four hours.

ICE-CREAM WITHOUT A FREEZER.

Make a smooth, thin custard of one pint of milk, one pint of cream, one cupful of white sugar, two eggs, a teaspoonful of lemon or vanilla extract, and a dessert-spoonful of corn-starch. When cool, pour it in a tin pail with a close cover, which set in a large pail or tub containing

ice and salt. Heap the ice about and over the tin pail, and in about an hour the cream will be nicely frozen.

COOL HOUSES IN SUMMER.

During severe heat, close the doors and windows of lower rooms after eight o'clock in the morning, with the exception of some north door or window, and open the doors leading into the hall or the stairway. Upper rooms not being in use until night will naturally be left open to sun and breeze, as all sleeping rooms should be. From these, the cooler air will descend to the rooms below, while the warmer current will ascend. Toward the middle of the afternoon, four or five o'clock, east and south windows can be opened; and at sunset all can be flung wide, and, if there are screens, remain so through the night. In the morning, the house will seem to have absorbed coolness enough to last until the relief of another sunset.

ROOMS WITHOUT FLIES.

Farm-house rooms in daily use are generally found swarming with flies. It is only now and then that the visitor in rural districts enjoys the luxury of a dining-room where there are screens at windows and doors, and a delightful absence of these buzzing and somewhat filthy annoyances. If farm-wives only realized how easy it is to get the upper hand of flies, they would not submit to them as they do. Fifty cents worth of mosquito netting, if the wire screening can not be purchased, securely tacked on plain pine frames, and placed in the doors and windows of the dining-room, before the flies have taken possession of the house, will keep the room almost entirely free of them all summer. If there is a baby in the house who likes to poke his fingers

through the door-screen, the lower half can have slats nailed across, or be composed of boards entirely. A bit of coiled wire spring will keep the door from being left ajar. There should also be netting at bedroom and pantry windows. If these screens are all put in place before the flies make their appearance, there will be very few intruders. Flies know enough to become "wonted" to places, and it is not so easy driving them away after they have once made themselves at home.

A POT-POURRI, OR SCENT-JAR.

Some of the "decorated" jars which have given pleasant occupation to so many young fingers the past two years, can be put to appropriate use by filling them alternately with layers of salt and any fragrant leaves or blossoms that can be obtained. Spices should also be sprinkled on the leaves. Sweet clover, rosemary, lemon verbena, rose geranium, June roses, sweet briar, lavender, and as many more as can be found may be used. Cinnamon, clove, and nutmeg ground together add greatly to the strength of the perfume. After filling, keep the jar closely covered for three months. After that, if the contents are occasionally stirred with a stick, and the cover left off for a few moments, the room will be filled with a delightful fragrance.

Another scent-jar that will keep its perfume for years is made chiefly of materials from the drug store. Bruise together four ounces of orris root and sweet flag. Add three ounces of sandal wood, one ounce of cedar, one ounce each of gum benzoin, styrax, and nutmeg, powdered, half a drachm of essence of lemon, one drachm of millefleurs, twenty drops of oil of lavender, ten grains of musk, and three ounces of rose leaves. Mix all together, and add a pound of fine salt. Mrs. "Daisy Eyebright" finds this mixture excellent for perfuming linen, furs,

and woollen goods, as well as for filling scent-jars. It should be kept covered. When used for drawers and boxes, the salt and rose leaves are omitted, ten drops of otto of rose substituted, and the powder placed in silk or flannel bags.

GRAPES AND PEARS FOR THE HOLIDAYS.

Select the choicest and soundest specimens, and lay them on shelves in a cool, dark, and well-ventilated closet, or a darkened upper room, where there will be no danger of freezing, and where they can have plenty of space so as not to touch each other. Clusters of grapes should have the ends of their stems dipped in melted wax, and will keep best if hung up on slats to prevent any contact with the wall. Choice fall apples and pears, that otherwise might not appear at Christmas, should be wiped and placed on white paper. The cooler the room is, without freezing, the better the fruit will keep, and good ventilation is strictly necessary. The Concords, Isabellas, and other late-ripening grapes are excellent for such storing, and when freezing weather arrives can be packed in sawdust, and kept nearly all winter.

WARMED BEDROOMS.

There is no surer pathway to the tomb, says Mrs. "Eyebright," than cold bedrooms and cold beds. "Neuralgia, pneumonia, and consumption itself can often be traced to the comfortless room in which children and delicate persons are forced to sleep." It is not at all true that "cold bedrooms are healthy." This favorite idea should cease to be held by people who lay claims to common sense. The less we are roasted in summer and frozen in winter, the nearer we approach a climate most conducive to health. It should be the

home-keeper's study to secure as far as possible a temperate climate for the house. Nothing can be better for bedrooms in winter than fresh air, with the chill removed from it. Any one who can afford to have such an atmosphere, and still permits himself and family to go shivering to bed to breathe over and over again the same icy air, the impurity of which is not at all "healthy," because it is so cold, ought to be prosecuted for at least an attempt to commit murder. By a happy provision of nature, most people live either where coal is cheap or where wood is plenty; and in ordinary houses, such as are not warmed throughout by furnaces, a hall-stove, burning either hard coal or chunks of oak and hickory, will give to the upper rooms in winter an atmosphere that has the bite taken out of it; while a window in each bedroom, if there is no better method of ventilation, can be let down an inch at the top, to feed sleeping lungs with a comfortable amount of oxygen.

If economy in fuel must be used, the stove through the day need not be fed, but at night right-minded economy will see that it sends out and sends up its comforting cheer.

CHAPTER XII.

FARM NEIGHBORHOODS.

Just as where two or three are met together in His name, there reigns in their midst the blessed Spirit, so where two or four farms front each other, exists the possibility of NEIGHBORHOOD. And a neighborhood is an excellent thing in the country. It is only the work-weary, noise-deafened, and perhaps slightly dyspeptic city mind that ever sings in earnest of the charms of solitude, and the all-satisfying companionship of nature. "If I must choose between men and trees," says a wise and witty somebody, "I must say that I prefer men." Transplant your weary city-ite to the quiet and solitude of some farm lying five miles from its little country post-office, give him the sighing of the breeze and the chirp of the crickets night and day, with an Agricultural Report for reading, and the chickens and calves for companions, and in less than a year's time you will probably have on your hands a man gratefully ready to return to the cheerful activities and social advantages of his city home.

No one wants too much of anything, even of the serene, companionless quiet of a beautiful country region, and the happiest existence must be that which can command, along with green fields and singing streams, something of the good cheer and inspiration of congenial fellowship, both in social and business life.

A jocose city friend, who is more than half in earnest, however, says life can never possess its full meaning for her until she can have a fine fruit and dairy farm within ten minutes walk of the post-office! And so, while we recognize the stern fact that we cannot combine all the

advantages of the city with all the beauty and freshness of the country, we can, in either situation, combine a little of the good in both.

It is characteristic of some farmers to jeer more or less at cities and city-life, and to regard city-people with a sort of derisive compassion. Visitors from cities to the country will grow familiar with such expressions as this: "So you've concluded to come out where you can live for a while!" Now if farm-people did but know it, it is an undeniable fact that, as farm-life now is, it is in these same derided cities that one often lives most and lives best, providing one is not crushed within the narrow groove of poverty. While farmers shrug their shoulders at cities, let them remember that cities are drawing their sons and daughters away from them! that culture, society, and the pleasant clash and sparkle of immense business activities, often make lonesome, monotonous farm-work very distasteful in comparison.

And whose fault is it that farm-work is lonesome and monotonous? Certainly not the fault of the children born to it. Nor can the trouble be attributed to Dame Nature, who has given such lavish materials for beautiful homes. If farmers want to fortify their lofty position in regard to real "living," and if they want to keep their children near them, they must make an effort to lighten the lonesomeness and the monotony, and to create homes from which the children will not glide away as they grow older.

Let them try, among other things, the NEIGHBORHOOD cure. Half a dozen families, settled in neat houses within "calling" distance of each other, with spacious fruit and flower-gardens, snug barns and granaries, and a single wide street adorned with shade trees and neat walks, would form a community richly productive of good. And what a charming contrast it would be to the same number of houses strung lonesomely a mile or more apart!

In the West, where land lines are drawn with geometric precision, and the comparative newness of the country makes the plan easily practicable, it is a wonder that farm-neighborhoods have not sprung naturally into existence. Four "forties," or four "eighties," or even larger farms, touching each other at a central point, might have all their houses, barns, and other buildings collected in a social and picturesque little settlement at this center. The cross-roads running through, might be set with shade trees, and fenced with neat and thrifty hedges. It would not be a great expense to make narrow gravel or flag walks on either side of these streets, with pretty rustic gateways leading into the grounds of each home. In the center of the small square formed by the intersecting roads, a well might be sunk, and a pump placed, shaded by a light rustic roof, and provided with drinking-cup and trough. Enough blessings, both from man and beast, would descend upon such an effort, in even one hot and dusty summer day, to pay the cost of it. One of these corner homes might maintain a good croquet-ground; another, a capital swing—large enough to send fathers and mothers into the air, as well as their children. Another could furnish a smooth and capacious stretch of turf for foot-ball and other games; while the ambition of the remaining corner might perhaps unfold beautifully in a comfortable and pleasant reading and club-room, where, in long winter evenings, the little community might gather sometimes for the reading and discussion of things of interest.

An attractive nucleus like this once formed, a portion, at least, of the sons and daughters growing up would be apt to build homes near at hand, and so the growth and beauty of the neighborhood would increase rather than diminish under the touch of the swift years.

Where four or five friendly families are gathered together, it would be no great task for some one of the fathers to

collect the children, in winter weather, into a generous sleigh-box (I would suggest plenty of sleigh-bells and warm robes), and take them to school, some other father going for them at night. The dreariness and inefficiency of the average country school is bad enough, without subjecting children to the added misery of wading through miles of snow, and facing biting winds in order to reach its portal. And just here it may not be out of place to assert that if even these four or five families would but take hold of their country school, and resolve to make it something worthy of the name, a great reform would take place. If they would see that their school-building is capable of being decently warmed and decently ventilated; that it is kept clean and wholesome, and also free from the scribblings and scrawlings which are now its inevitable characteristic; if they would take one brief day, and set out a few shade trees and hardy shrubs, and encourage the "big scholars" to take care of them; if they would cultivate the acquaintance of the teacher; if they would visit the school, not on the last day, but every two or three weeks; and if every Saturday evening they would give five or twenty minutes to a review of their children's progress, the "District School" would speedily become an institution fit to take in hand the plastic minds and hearts of innocent children.

Many more or less important advantages would spring from such a community. Each family subscribing for one or two first-class magazines and newspapers, a profitable "circulating library," full of instruction and entertainment, would be the result. Clothes, groceries, and farm-supplies, could be purchased at wholesale rates, and divided according to individual orders. Some happy boy, with a pony and stout leather satchel, could be chosen mail-carrier to and from the, perhaps, distant post-office, and there would follow the luxury of a daily paper for the reading-room, and letters delivered at the door. A

blacksmith's forge might be maintained, and save many trips to the village for simple repairs. A large easy wagon and four horses could occasionally convey the lecture or church-going portion of these families to town, when there should be something specially worth hearing; and the same vehicle would be fine for pic-nic expeditions and harvest frolics. A good sermon, out of the many now reported in the newspapers, might be selected for reading at some neighbor's house on rainy or snowy Sundays; and it would be strange if, even in so small a village, there might not be an organ and two or three good voices for the accompanying hymns. Such things do good, sometimes more good than is obtained in some stately church, with its imposing fashion and formality. Sewing-Bees might be held, and the women expeditiously help each other through the hurry of spring and fall sewing. Husking-frolics and Wood-sawing Socials would occur; and what to both men and women is often hard and monotonous drudgery, would prove almost a recreation, because of the good cheer of humanity's helpful and inspiring companionship.

Such a NEIGHBORHOOD would be worth while, if only for its interchange of friendly lights on a stormy December night! What mother's heart but would beat braver as she rocks her sick baby in her arms, to know that three minutes distant, were other mother-hearts ready with their sympathetic aid and worthy counsel? What children but would grow up happier, and better, and more intelligent from having daily companionship with other happy, good, and intelligent children? What man but would enjoy and profit by the neighborly chat over farm matters, and political aspects, the neighborly help and the pleasant competition in making neat and thrifty homes?

CHAPTER XIII.

TO FARMERS' WIVES.

A vigorous and truthful English writer declares that "unless a woman lives with a sister or a faithful woman-friend, it must be scored one against her chances for good health, that she has no wife to take care of her ! There is seldom any one to do for her what she does for her husband. Nobody reminds her to change her boots when they are damp, or tenderly jogs her attention as to draughts, or gives her the little cossetings which so often ward off colds, headaches, and similarly small ills."

When she is half sick from any of these same petty ills, she can not, or at any rate will not, turn her back upon the kitchen and the children, and go off to the comfort and quiet of half a day's repose in her bedroom, with no notion of being intruded upon. Her husband would do this and come out refreshed, and perhaps cured ; but for herself such "laying off" is generally out of the question. The bread-sponge will be rising up in judgment against her, the baby will be falling down stairs, or tumbling into the well ; the morning dishes will be all the harder to do if left standing ; and then there is the inevitable dinner, and the roaring lions coming home to it by and by ! Of course, she can not rest. She "drags around" through the day, and, by leaving a few things undone, gets to bed by nine o'clock for the much needed rest and sleep, if she is not too ill to sleep, or if the possible baby does not disturb her.

It is because of this lack of time for self-nursing that farmers' wives ought to take the best precautions against having any illness. "An ounce of prevention" is particularly valuable to those who have no one to take care of them when they become ill.

Maternity is womanhood's shadow ; and, whether glad or sorrowful in its possession, women are generally followed by it into all their professions, whether they be farm-wives, missionaries, or editors of fashion magazines. Man seldom has the care of children added to his business work. It would strike us as a very melancholy sight to see a man devoting the energies of one arm to a reaper, while he holds a worrying baby in the other ; or planting rows of potatoes in the hurry of spring work, while a small infant follows close at his heels crying to be taken ! Such a man would expect half the town to rush to his rescue ; and yet these are like the sights we see in women's work every day.

It is because of this double burden, so patiently and often so joyously borne, that women deserve happier lives and longer lives than they often experience. And the fault is largely their own that they do not experience them. Pour upon me no torrent of reproaches, dear reader, but it is a fact. You do not take care of yourself. In addition to care of children and husband and the housework, you have to be mother and nurse to yourself, or else suffer more or less from neglect. Did you ever reflect upon this fact ? Years ago the blessed mother-hands cared for you ; you were not over-worked ; you had plenty of sleep, you had "good times" now and then with your friends, and, above all, you had something happy and beautiful to look forward to. Now, you are away from the brooding mother-wings, and have a brood of your own ; cares and duties have quite banished the little festivals and jollifications of the old days ; and the hope and dream of your life, husband and home, having been achieved, you have lost the healthful stimulus of a great hope, and settled into an endless round of housework—seeing away off somewhere a vague glimmer of sweet-by-and-by rest, with the children grown up into talented men and women, and still clinging to you with the whole-

hearted love of their childhood. Dear woman, do not longer be given up to the endless round of dull, unrelieved labor, or else take you gaze quite away from that distant glimmer! Ten to one you will not live to realize such pleasant hopes; or, if your life is prolonged, you will find that talented sons and daughters can not turn with the old clinging love of their early days to the mother they have so completely outgrown and distanced—to the poor, old, self-sacrificed mother, shrivelled, both in body and in mind, with only her faithful, loving heart to feel vaguely hurt and unsatisfied over the pitying love which her children can not help showing for her! Very few of us can enjoy a regard in which is mixed the element of compassion, and such regard, coming from child to parent, is, as painful as anything life affords.

There may be a deep and touching beauty, to some minds, in such complete body and mind sacrifice of the mother to housework and child-care; but it is all wrong, nevertheless. We may be pardoned for throwing ourselves into whirlpools, or into the jaws of lions and tigers, to lose our lives in saving our children; but to slowly sink, until we are buried, in the slough of broken-down health and mental stagnation, is something not to be condoned.

Busy mother, you who are not "taking care" of yourself, you who are toiling early and late for husband and children, and bestowing less attention on yourself than you would naturally give to the commonest four-footed beast of burden, reflect a moment, and see if it is not a solemn duty you owe to yourself and to your husband and children, that you make sure no such future opens before you! If you have thus far made a cipher of yourself, turn a new leaf at once, and commence caring a little for the wife of your husband and the mother of your children! You had a fair stock of good health and happy spirits to begin with. What right have you to squander such precious capital? If attention to one's own health

and well-being looks "selfish," it looks otherwise when you reflect that upon your health and well-being depends the happiness and best welfare of the household.

I saw a blessed sight the other day. A lady on the shady side of fifty (why "shady?" we ought to say the golden side of fifty!) going to her bedroom mirror to fasten some pink and white asters in her hair and at her collar, before summoning her husband and son to the neatly spread tea-table that awaited them—no sombre purple tints, such as somehow seem to be chosen by people of "years," if any are chosen at all, but the bright, delicate *couleur de rose* that youth likes to select! And how sweetly they looked in her half-silvered hair, and in the soft white ruffle under her chin! Her dress was merely a striped print, and her white apron of that ample shape that makes aprons worth while; but what neatness, and what faint bewitching scents of lavender and rose-leaves enveloped her person! I am afraid she thought she saw surprise mingled with my glance of admiration, for she said "Do you think they are too gay for me?" and added, as if half apologizing, "The boys like to see me wear something pretty."

When the "boys" came in to supper I thought to myself that the mother's neat, personal ways must have influenced the other members of the household, for the working jackets had been exchanged for clean linen coats; and though very richly tanned, their faces and hands were clean enough to be kissed by queens, while one looked in vain for the proverbial "hay-seed" in their well cut and well-brushed hair and beards. And what intelligent and up-to-the-times talk there was from the lips of these three plain farm-people!—the mother not one whit behind her "boys," and as dextrous in her views of the Presidency and Black's new story, as in pouring the tea and dispensing the stewed pears.

I fancied it must have been from a home like this, or

what it was before the pretty daughters married and went away, that our Whittier caught that song of "Life Among the Hills."

"—— 'Twere well if often
To rugged farm-life came the gift
To harmonize and soften.

If more and more we found the troth
Of fact and fancy plighted;
And culture's charm and labor's strength
In rural homes united.

The simple life, the homely hearth,
With beauty's sphere enshrouding,
And blessing toil where toil abounds,
With graces more abounding."

Is not this a pleasanter home-woman to look at than she who as some one says, "begins by being worth more than a hired girl at twelve dollars per month, and ends in a nervous, fretful, empty-minded, 'broken-down' old woman at forty-five"?

Religiously consider, then, a few little rules and regulations that will help you to maintain health and to preserve in yourself the beauty and freshness of mind, and looks that will make you not only a comfort to yourself, but a cheering comrade to your husband and the fond friend and genial companion of your children.

Fresh air, cleanliness of person, comfortable clothing, nourishing food, sufficient sleep, and occasional recreation and diversion, are six indispensable requirements for Good Health. If I were addressing any but a farmer's wife, or an active home-keeper anywhere, I should add "plenty of exercise," which you already have.

In summer, where a farm-house is favorably situated, the morning work in kitchen and dairy, and I trust a bit of flower garden, is all done in "fresh air." For the afternoon there is generally a shady porch or a pleasant open window, where pure, blood-sweetening air can

still be enjoyed ; and at night there should be a window or two let down from the top in as spacious a sleeping room as the house will admit of. Small bedrooms ought never to enter into a house plan. In winter, fresh air is not so easily obtained, or its absence so easily detected. Shut up in the house the greater part of the time, you fail to notice its vitiated atmosphere ; but go out for a walk or a ride, and you will discover on returning to the unventilated living-room (it ought to be called a dying-room !) a "close," impure taint in the air. And this is the kind of stuff you breathe all the time, unless you make some arrangements for letting the foul air escape. You must not tolerate its presence any more than you would that of toads and snakes. A window let down a little from the top will permit great quantities of bad air to escape, and the fresh air will find a way to replace it somehow. Your husband and school-going children will find a good deal of their air out of doors, and you are entitled to the best you can make of the in-door atmosphere.

A room with a warm floor, plenty of sunlight, and an outlet for impure air, is the only one fit to be chosen for a winter living or working room.

If you have a bath-room in the house capable of being comfortably warmed in winter, and affording its cool showers and douches in summer, with pipes to bring and carry away water, you have one of the greatest luxuries of civilization. If you have not such a room, fit up some closet for the purpose, and have a stove-pipe run through it from the kitchen or living-room stove—or perhaps the bedroom stove may be placed near enough to warm it through the open door. If you must depend upon your own resources for its arrangements, you may be obliged to content yourself with a common tub large enough to stand and bathe in without slopping the floor, and a large tin pail for bringing and carrying away the water. I

have seen a half-barrel cut down and, with cushioned edges, made into a very good sitz-bath tub. (Those made of zinc or tin cost three or four dollars.) There should be a sponge for each individual, and always plenty of dry towels. A bottle of ammonia and some good Castile soap should never be wanting. If there is a window for sunlight to come pouring through for half the day, so much the better; the place can then be easily kept dry and well aired.

And now, after making sure of your fresh air, will you try, if you have not tried, the rejuvenating influence of a daily bath? You may think you have no time for it. I often notice that those mothers who have "no time" have houses and children in spic and span order, while they themselves look neglected and jaded, and sometimes, alas! just a little negligent in their dress. It is like the vine-leaves and blossoms dancing high up in the air and sunlight, while low down in the darkness and shadow grows the unlovely, unnoticed mother-root that gives them life. Such maternity is more beautiful in vines than it is in human life. Take a few moments from your housework and your child-care for yourself. Once in the habit of a daily bath, it comes as natural and requires almost as little time as washing your face and hands. Just before going to bed is the best time for it. You are not only certain of being uninterrupted, but you will find yourself so refreshed and "rested" that good sound sleep will at once follow. Quickness and thoroughness will always prevent any "catching cold" or any disagreeable chill; and so five minutes is ample time for an all-over bath. The water should be nearer warm than cold, and there need not be an ocean of it; two quarts in the washbowl, with a few drops of aromatic ammonia and a large, soft sponge, constitute all that is needed where baths are taken every day. After the bath a well-aired night gown of cotton or flannel should be put

on, and the flannels and chemises worn through the day hung where they will be accessible to air. Our clothes are continually absorbing waste and putrid matter through the pores of the skin, and it is strictly necessary to personal cleanliness, that day-garments should not be worn through the night, but be given a chance to throw off something of the invisible impurities they have collected.

In the morning, the busy morning, when so many things to be done confront your waking eyes, you have only to take a dash of cold water on your face, chest, and arms, and proceed to dress. For this morning ablution a bottle of brine made from sea-salt is excellent to have at hand. Pour a little upon a wet cloth, or sponge, and rub face, breast, and arm-pits. It purifies and invigorates the skin. Sitz-baths in blood-warm water should be taken once a week for the space of five or ten minutes. They help prevent many of the diseases and weaknesses that woman-flesh seems to be heir to.

Secure another five minutes from your twenty-four hours, and devote it to your hair and teeth. If the scalp is washed once or twice a week in water in which is dissolved a little borax, or in which is mixed a few drops of ammonia, it will need no raking from ivory teeth, and the hair will be clean and glossy, especially if thoroughly brushed with a stiff brush once a day. Never use oils or pomades. If the hair is too dry and fluffy for comfort (it cannot be too much so for fashion—at present!), apply to it a little of the mixture of bay-rum and glycerine, which druggists will put up for twenty-five cents. Every new moon, clip the ends of your hair; this may be a “notion,” but it is one that repays adoption.

If you have sound teeth, you cannot be too grateful for such a possession, and should not grudge giving them such care as will preserve them, if possible, into old age. Brush them thoroughly at night in soap and water, in which is a drop of the ever useful ammonia, and rinse

mouth and throat in clear water. After each meal but half a minute will be required to rinse the mouth, so that no particle of food may remain in the teeth to breed tartar and decay. If there are bad teeth that are past filling, summon a little grit and have them removed at once; as besides being unsightly they are like constant malaria to the lungs. If one is afflicted with bad breath, even if the teeth are sound, the stomach needs attention, and a series of charcoal powders with plain diet will soon correct its evil ways.

White and soft hands are not always compatible with big ironings and all the miscellaneous work of a farm-kitchen, but your hands can receive better treatment than you perhaps give them. "My mamma's hands are white, and she wears a pretty ring," boasted one little four-year old to a playmate who, with pitifully downcast eyes and mute lips, was realizing the fact that her mamma's hands were nothing to brag of. Both these mothers were busy workers, but one "took care" of herself a little, while the other did not, and kept her rings in a box.

It is not vanity or silliness to make the best of even our hands. In sweeping floors, polishing stoves, and in garden work, old gloves should always be worn; and there should be plenty of holders about the stove for managing kettles, and saucepans, and taking things from the oven. An excellent thing in winter is a thick flannel mitten made large enough to slip on easily, and hung handily at the back of the stove, to be used in opening the stove and putting in wood. At night a little glycerine thinned with lemon juice and rubbed on the hands will tend to keep them soft and prevent roughness and chapping. This mixture is also excellent for burning from wind and sun.

Glycerine, borax, ammonia, sea-salt, and lemon juice, are all cheap and excellent "cosmetics" and aids to

cleanliness ; and if to these can be added a bottle of some pure, delicate perfume, like essence of English violet, or white rose, your toilet table is quite plentifully supplied.

The next question to consider is comfortable and becoming clothing, for notwithstanding the seeming impossibility of the task, they can be combined. There is a happy medium between the grotesque "bloomer" of thirty years ago and the peacock tails of the present day, that brave women can and do adopt everywhere, and still are within that very proper region that is bounded by the pales of fashion. There is a woman living who years ago very quietly made for herself some under garments somewhat like close-fitting basquines, so that with rows of buttons around the waists and ruffles at the bottom, they answered for four articles of dress, viz., chemise, corset, skirt-supporter, and underskirt. She has worn them ever since with great comfort and satisfaction, and has never thought of being strong-minded or blowing a "reform" trumpet over her self-emancipation.

If you live anywhere within our so-called temperate zone, you should wear under flannels throughout the year. It is not necessary to proclaim their great comfort in winter, for you are well aware of it ; but you may not know that you will be cooler and more comfortable in summer for wearing them, and greatly protected from chilly morning and evening air, and from sudden changes in the weather. Summer flannel can be of light quality, and that made of half wool and half cotton is less liable to shrink, and answers every purpose of protection. Those for winter wear should be of all-wool flannel and made high in the neck, and with sleeves coming below the elbow. Whether for summer or winter wear, they should be made long enough to cover the hips. A great many ladies now wear winter flannels in vest and drawers combined in one garment, with another "union suit" in cotton worn over it ; then with a warm balmoral skirt

and sensible woollen stockings, no more underwear is required.

This is such an improvement on the old regulation of separate under flannels, chemise, drawers, corset, underskirt, overskirt, and perhaps a dress divided into a basque and two additional skirts, that no woman who has once tried the delightful comfort of dressing so sensibly will go back to the irksome and complicated toggery she used to wear.

Let us dress as comfortably and at the same time as becomingly as we can. How much of our nervousness, and irritability, and weariness, might be traced to a dragging skirt, or the compression of half a dozen bands about the waist, or a "hateful" corset, or an ill-fitting or out-of-fashion dress! To be clean and to be comfortably and tastefully dressed is the condition that is indeed "next to godliness." Have we not often seen the good effect of a bath and a clean, nicely-ironed frock or apron upon some tired, dirt-demoralized little child? And what are we but children, to be overcome now and then by the dust and grime of our work and the depressing influence of a faded calico! When we find ourselves in such sloughs, let us lose no time in getting out of them.

Being a farm-wife, and not accustomed to the more leisurely mornings of "eight-hour" workers, you must have clothes into which you can jump, as it were. And is it not just as easy to jump into a pretty, nicely-fitting percale or gingham working-costume, with its clean collar or ruff already basted in the neck, as it is to jump into a limp, stringy calico "wrapper" of some dark, ugly pattern, and having about as much comeliness as a meal-sack with a string tied around its center? Percales and ginghams cost a trifle more at the start, but they will outwear and outwash half a dozen cheap prints; and besides will always look fresh and new if light, firm colors are selected.

There are always to be found neat and simple, and at the same time stylish patterns for making up these working suits in one garment, the trimming being put on to simulate jackets or sacques. The skirts should be made short enough to escape dust and dew, say within four or five inches of the floor, and one cannot realize until she wears a dress so shortened, the increased ease and dispatch with which work can be accomplished.

Always maintain a good supply of collars and ruffles. Their cost ready made is trifling, and they are still cheaper when made at home; half a yard of linen, the same of book-muslin or organdy, and a little edging, will make up a year's supply for every-day wear; and no "trifle" adds so much to woman's dress as something pure and white about the neck, fastened with a becoming knot of ribbon or an inexpensive little brooch.

If you make it a rule to baste or pin something of this sort in the neck of your dress after undressing at night, it will be something of a help toward expeditious dressing in the morning.

Morning caps of book-muslin, cambric, or lace—a circular piece of the material gathered into a band of velvet or ribbon to fit the head—are exceedingly convenient, and can be made very becoming; besides, they protect the hair from dust when sweeping.

Remember that you are to be "mother" to yourself! You do not permit the children to leave the warm room and go out in the cold or damp to play without an extra scarf or cape. You do not let them keep on their wet shoes and damp stockings when they come home from school on a stormy day. If they have sore throats, and colds, and little bad feelings, you wrap up their necks, give them simple remedies, and try to keep them from getting worse. See that you are half as considerate to yourself—unless you are anxious to leave them mother-

less! Don't run out of the heated kitchen to wrestle with the line full of frozen clothes, bare-headed and thinly shod. Don't sit up sewing at night and let the fire go out, thinking it silly to burn wood just for yourself. Don't sit up at all beyond bedtime hours, unless it is a case of sickness or some strictly necessary sewing, and then do not go cold and shivering, or faint and hungry, to bed; but keep a comfortable fire, and before retiring take a cup of hot milk and tea, and some bread and butter, or a bowl of chicken broth or oyster soup. Never keep damp stockings and shoes on your feet or sit in a room where you feel chilly. If you have headache, or backache, or a "wretched cold" (you will not be troubled with these ills very much if you take good sanitary precautions against them), do not try the sometimes too smart remedy of "working it off," but coddle yourself to the best of your ability, and let at least a part of the work await the sure coming of another day, and do not "fret" about it, else the shirking will do no good; but just rest a little and get well. Do not wear tight or dragging clothes. When going to ride in winter, put on an extra pair of stockings and button a newspaper or a piece of flannel inside your dress over your chest and lungs.

Be friendly and good to your stomach. Do not live on hot biscuits, incessant pork, pie-crust, cake, and deluges of tea and coffee. The farm generally affords plenty of milk, eggs, poultry, wheat, fruit, and vegetables. You are surrounded with a world of delicious and healthful foods. As for tea and coffee, they are not food at all, except for the accompanying sugar and cream. But one cup of good coffee, or one cup of good tea, does no one any great harm, and is often the gentle stimulant and "care-breaker" that a woman needs. It is an outrage on the stomach to drown it at meal times with any kind of fluid, ice-water being the most hurtful of all.

It is your right to have eight or nine hours out of the twenty-four for sleep. Let nothing but sickness shove aside this important corner-stone of health. It is all wrong to rise at day-dawn in summer, and long before sunrise in winter, feeling only half rested, and as if you would "give the world" for one more hour of sleep. Nothing is gained by lashing nature on to extraordinary feats of endurance. Sooner or later she will show that she does not submit to such things without ample revenge. If there are portions of the year when farm-work, and consequently housework, must be rushed, or it seems necessary to use the "cool of the day," viz., between four and six o'clock A. M., an afternoon nap, even if it lasts but ten minutes, will go far to soothe the nerve-weariness that comes of lost sleep. Indeed, my home-keeper, a ten-minute nap is always beneficial to you; and when you lay your baby down for his after-dinner repose, remember that you, too, are in need of a little refreshing rest. Lie down beside him, or what is better, lie down away from him, and resolutely close your eyes for fifteen minutes, whether you sleep or not. You will rise feeling stronger and clear-headed, and the afternoon work will come easier to you than if you had plodded on without stopping.

Plan easily-prepared breakfasts and suppers, and have the brunt of the day's work in the forenoon, when you will naturally feel most like grappling with it. There are some women who are always in a whirlpool of work, yet they do not accomplish as much as their calmer and more systematic sisters, who find time for a little reading or out-door recreation now and then. To rise in the morning and cook potatoes, bake biscuits, fry or broil meats, spread the table, attend to small children, and strain and set away the morning milk, as I have seen more than one farm-wife do, is enough to tire one out in the very beginning of the day. A breakfast of white and

graham bread, cold roast or boiled meat, hashed potatoes, oat or wheat grits, and some kind of fruit, is good enough for kings and emperors, and it almost cooks itself. The same bill of fare, varied by an omelet, or milk-toast, or baked potatoes, or an easily-made johnny cake, answers equally well for supper, and what a vast amount of flurry and fluster might be saved by its adoption.

Do not neglect that world within your head!—that brain-world wherein you used to dream fine dreams, and build many an airy castle! Do not give up hopes and aspirations and special tastes. If you once loved to “twang the guitar,” or “sweep the dulcimer,” or had a talent for drawing, or writing for the newspapers, or possessed a gentle taste for botanizing, and collecting shells and minerals and butterflies, continue to cultivate the faculty. A gratified longing for such things is just as necessary for the mind’s welfare as gratified hunger for beef and vegetables is necessary for the physical well-being. Interest your children in these things, and among them you will be sure to find more than one eager and sympathetic co-worker.

Above all, do not turn your back upon good reading. Subscribe to nothing weak and trashy. A good practical newspaper, such as treats of the household, the garden, and the farm, and some first-class journal filled with stories, poems, sketches, and science articles, by talented and scholarly authors, are worth tons of “pictorials” and cheap romances.

Have something “going forward,” if it is nothing more than the cultivation of new kinds of strawberries and chickens, a winter reading club of three or four neighbors, or a pleasant little annual excursion, or “camp-out,” on some lake-side or mountain-top with your children. Beware of the “all work and no play” that breaks down health and spirits, and starves the mind. And do not depend entirely upon your husband

for all the happiness and good cheer of your life, else you will sometimes be disappointed and disheartened. Diverting occupations, friendship, good books, and the care and companionship of children, will healthfully fill any voids in your heart that otherwise might ache; and at any rate you will be cared for none the less if you prove yourself able to worry along without constant adoration.

In a word, take care of yourself physically, mentally, and spiritually, and we shall see fewer sad-faced, hopeless-eyed women in our farm homes, and fewer bereaved husbands casting about for their second and third wives.

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